

A
PEDESTRIAN TOUR
THROUGH
NORTH WALES,
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS.

By J. HUCKS, B. A.

With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow,
If bleak and barren Cambria's hills arise,
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow,
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fire the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

THE MINSTREL.

London:

Printed for J. DEBRETT, Piccadilly; and J.
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and Messrs. DYER, and TREWMAN, Exeter.

1795.

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1795

P R E F A C E.

AT a time so peculiarly alarming to the affairs of this country, that every hour comes attended with some fresh calamity: when reason and justice are suffering in the conflict of nations: when rapine and oppression are desolating the fairest regions of Europe: in short, when the common interests of humanity, when every dear and invaluable privilege, that can render society lovely and desirable, is

altogether neglected or forgotten, and the happy re-union of liberty and tranquillity, more the object of our wishes than our expectations; in such an eventful, but fatal, period of the political drama, the following letters may probably be considered as an intrusion upon the public attention, too much absorbed in the nice intrigues of the cabinet and the field, to unbend their thoughts to lighter pursuits, when the great scale of our political existence is in danger of sinking for ever.

Left any such argument should be adduced against him, the author begs
leave

leave to make one observation, (viz.) That he has written neither for the statesman, the general, or the politician; he is sensible, that from the nature of the subject, his little work will not be extended amongst a very large class of readers; the amusement of an individual was originally the sole object of the following letters, but he has ventured to make them public, under the hope that they may, in some measure, contribute to the satisfaction of those who have not seen, yet may wish to become familiar with, the outlines of a country, so dissimilar in every respect to England; and to whom a slight sketch of the most prominent

prominent features of its inhabitants, may not appear either tedious or uninteresting ; and he flatters himself, they will not be unacceptable to those, who, like himself, might be induced to explore the beautiful scenery of North Wales ; and to whom the short, though probably imperfect account of it there given, may prove an useful companion, to direct them in their progress through a country, to which they might be altogether unacquainted.

He claims the indulgence of his readers for the tautology and egotism, almost inseparable from works of such
a descrip-

a description; but he has, as much as possible, endeavoured to avoid a repetition of names, and for this reason, has, in most cases, spoken of himself as being the only spectator; at the same time, in justice to those who accompanied him, he takes this opportunity of acknowledging himself, upon many occasions, greatly indebted to them for many interesting remarks and useful information, which otherwise he could not have had the means of acquiring.

Since he first conceived the design of publishing these letters, some necessary additions have been made, and
a short

a short Appendix added; for the sake of giving them a more connected form; for there were a few places, which, owing to particular circumstances, it was not in his power to see, and a short account of these, together with some other detached observations, compose the Appendix, to which also are subjoined the names of the most noted places that they visited in the course of their route, and their distances from each other. Those marked with one or more asterisks, imply the number of nights they remained at each.

PEDESTRIAN TOUR,

Ec. Ec. Ec.

LETTER I.

BALA, North Wales, July 11, 1794.

SURROUNDED on all sides by cloud-capt mountains; arrived amongst a people, to whose language I am a perfect stranger, and whose manners and customs are as eccentric as they are singular, every circumstance attracts attention, and every object excites admiration. But it is with pleasure, my dear friend, that I cease for a while from contemplating the scene around me, and turn to that

B

which

which I have so lately quitted: memory willingly lingers round a spot where the mind has not been much oppressed with sorrow or care; and I must, in justice, acknowledge, that during a residence of three years at Cambridge, the happiness I there enjoyed was scarcely ever interrupted, or overshadowed even by the smallest cloud of misfortune; a retrospect will therefore prove to me a constant source of satisfaction, because the memory of the past will not be accompanied with images of regret, or any other cause of sorrow or reproach. It will be peculiarly pleasing to me to write to you from time to time, and give you some account of our "Travels' History," to relate to you all our "most disastrous chances and moving accidents by flood or field;" for in every thing which concerned us, you were pleased to express yourself particularly interested,

and

and I assure you, it is not alone in compliance with your earnest and repeated request, but under the immediate impulse of my own wishes and inclination, that I am now induced to write to you.

The mode of travelling which we have adopted, at the first view promises nothing remarkably alluring; and I think you were of opinion that our resolution was not equal to the undertaking of such an enterprize, and treated the whole plan as visionary and romantic. But I flatter myself you will now be convinced we are in earnest, especially when I tell you that experience has more than ever confirmed us in our original intention; for the pleasure we have hitherto derived from our progress, has much exceeded our most sanguine expectations.

B 2

I shall

I shall now proceed to give you a short detail of occurrences, from the day on which my *compagnon de voyage* and myself departed from Cambridge, to the present time. Behold us, then, more like two pilgrims performing a journey to the tomb of some wonder-working saint, than men travelling for their pleasure and amusement. We are so completely metamorphosed, that I much doubt whether you would recognise us through our disguise; we carry our clothes, &c. in a wallet or knapsack, from which we have not hitherto experienced the slightest inconvenience: as for all ideas of appearance and gentility, they are entirely out of the question—our object is to see, not to be seen; and if I thought I had one acquaintance who would be ashamed of me and my knapsack, seated by the fire side of an honest Welsh peasant, in a country village,

village, I should not only make myself perfectly easy on my own account, but should be induced to pity and despise him for his weakness.

We made some stay at Oxford, where we experienced the utmost hospitality and attention; and then prosecuted our route by way of Gloucester, Ross, Hereford, Bishop's Castle, &c. I have annexed the names of the places we have passed through in their regular order, as well as their distances from each other, so that you will perceive we have not fatigued ourselves with very long marches.

It is not my intention to trouble you with a minute description of places; or with uninteresting accounts of individuals, from which you would not derive any very desirable information in the perusal,

nor I any gratification in the relation. The feelings of men generally harmonize with their situation; and sublime images must naturally arise in the mind, when the external objects of its contemplation are accompanied with any thing peculiarly grand or majestic: under such impressions I cannot, when I am upon the summit of a mountain, with a beautiful and fertile country widely extending upon the sight, think of any thing but the prospect before me; nor in admiring a cathedral constructed with all the elegance of finished architecture, could I reduce my thoughts to the rule and compass in order to measure its height and dimensions, or enter into a critique upon the justness of its proportions; the form would triumph over the matter, and drive every other consideration to a distance: and after contemplating the venerable remains of

some

some once celebrated fabric, I could not patiently endure to give an historical detail of its founder, the different benefactors to whom it has been indebted, or the charters and privileges it has enjoyed. But they are not alone sublime situations which excite sublime ideas; every object in nature is interesting, and wherever nature is, I feel similar sensations; mountains and valleys, rivers and rivulets, nay the smallest plants that are trodden under our feet, unseen or unregarded, are inexhaustible sources, to a contemplative mind, of gratification and delight.

O how can'st thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms, which nature to her vot'ry yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even;
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven;
O how can'st thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

The Minstrel.

Let

Let the atheist or the *manicheist* (if such there are in reality, as I know there are some professedly), pay a little attention to the philosophy of nature, ever changing, but still connected, at once majestic but simple, disdaining the rules and frigid boundaries of art, at the same time modelled upon the most beautiful and graceful proportion—their short-lived doubts must instantly vanish, and their daring incredulity yield to the most rational and forcible conviction ; they must then confess that this world could never have been created by chance, or be the work of a *malignant* deity ; but that it bears the traces of a hand divine, the beautiful production of a benevolent, eternal, and intellectual being. I can scarcely believe there is that man existing, who can see without emotion the beauteous orb of day rising in the east, and in the evening
 behold

behold its setting beams; who can look
 with apathy upon the moon when she
 gilds the brow of night, and all the nu-
 merous host of stars, the panoply of hea-
 ven, that shine around her; who equally
 unmoved by storms and sunshine, by
 calms and tempests, can yet be induced,
 from a pitiful and weak despair of a happy
 futurity, from a wilful incredulity, or a
 misguided scepticism, to deny the great
 and generating cause of all effects! The
 chief object of this expedition, and from
 which I hope to derive the greatest plea-
 sure, is to explore the hidden beauties of
 nature unmechanized by the ingenuity of
 man; as well as to make some observa-
 tions upon the human character under
 every different attitude it may assume;
 in short, to study nature in her works, and
 man in society. The lower orders of peo-
 ple in this part of Great Britain have as
 yet

yet presented to me only a picture of humiliation and wretchedness. Whether this be the general character, or but a partial appearance of the country, I shall have other opportunities of discovering in the prosecution of my journey : at present I am far from entertaining a favourable opinion of their stock of happiness ; undeniably there are numerous examples of apparent cheerfulness and content to be found amongst the poor inhabitants of a mud-built cottage ; but are not the social endearments of domestic life (the only source of enjoyment amongst the lower orders of mankind), too often im-bittered by repeated difficulties and distresses, and rendered so many aggravating circumstances to the wounded recollection of a parent, surrounded by a numerous and helpless family who look up to him for protection and support, which
 he

he is utterly unable to afford them? I believe and hope that such instances of want and degradation are rare; but very few of them are requisite to convince any man, capable of feeling for others as he would for himself, that the aggregate of happiness, amongst the lower species of our fellow-creatures, does not bear a just proportion to that of pain, and that their condition is capable of very essential improvement. Under the pressure of poverty and misfortune, the mind oftentimes forgets its noble nature, and the proper degree of estimation with which it should regard its own existence: and this is the case with that description of men here spoken of. To remove then this evil, by doing away the cause of the complaint (viz. Oppression), would be a work well worthy the attention of every friend of mankind. Under whatever circumstances of poverty
 and

and inferiority many of our fellow-creatures may be placed, yet they have a just claim upon our protection and support; for though habit, and the hard hand of oppressive want, may have contracted the modes of thinking amongst them, yet they undoubtedly possess intellects, which, if properly cultivated, might equally adorn a senate, or a forum, with those who are called their superiors, from the mere accidental circumstances of wealth, or hereditary distinctions. A human being, as he comes originally from the hand of nature, is every where the same; the capacity of improvement, the talents and virtues which the mind is capable of acquiring and exercising, are to every state of society alike inherent. Surely then all must rejoice in the melioration of that state, since to contribute to its improvement is the noblest pursuit of individuals,

and

and ought to be the sole end of all governments; but the sacred principles of the social compact are no longer regarded, and that which should be the first is now become the last care or consideration of legislative science. To say that the state of society cannot be improved, is either to assert its perfection, to confess that all exertions to improve that state would be vain, or that these political evils are either necessary or irremediable. To the first of these arguments, if they can be deemed worthy of such a denomination, there is no necessity to reply, because it carries with it its own conviction; and with respect to the last, no one will hesitate to pronounce it an impious reflection upon the benevolence of the Creator, whose intention could never be to subject man to any species of political tyranny whatever; and well indeed might this fair creation and celestial

C harmony

harmony be called a Manichean system, or work of a malevolent being, if he could sanction upon this globe the detestable crimes, and abhorred impieties committed under the patronage, and often the immediate consequence, of vicious and corrupted governments; or if he could fix so narrow and confined a boundary to human happiness.

The face of the country, as far as this place, is for the most part dull and uninteresting, our road lying chiefly over long and barren mountains, which is pretty much the general appearance of the interior part of North Wales, of which Bala is nearly the center; few living creatures cheer these dreary scenes, but here and there a miserable hut, that ill conceals its wretched inhabitants, and a few poor sheep, thinly scattered over the steep sides of the mountain, or picking the short grass from the
almost

almost naked summit of the shaggy rock ; we congratulate ourselves, therefore, on our present situation, and on having left behind us the worst part of our tour ; but there are some places which must be excepted from this general censure, and these I shall briefly take notice of. We slept at the King's Arms at Ross, which was formerly the habitation of that celebrated character who usually goes by the name of the " Man of Ross." He was truly a friend to the human kind.—He gave his wordly goods, as far as they would go, to the unfortunate ; and his best wishes and unqualified compassion to all ; his memory is still revered, and his loss still lamented. I cannot omit sending you a few lines which my fellow traveller scribbled upon a window shutter, unlike the general style of composition which such places abound with :

C 2.

" Richar

" Richer than misers o'er their countless hoards,
 Nobler than kings or king-polluted lords ;
 Here dwelt the Man of Ross. O traveller hear,
 Departed merit claims the rev'rend tear ;
 Friend to the friendless, to the sick man health,
 With generous joy he viewed his modest wealth :
 He heard the widow's heav'n-breath'd prayer of
 praise,
 He mark'd the shelter'd orphan's tearful gaze ;
 And o'er the dowried virgins snowy cheek,
 Bade bridal love suffuse its blushes meek.
 If 'neath this roof thy wine cheer'd moments pass,
 Fill to the good man's name one grateful glass,
 To higher zest shall mem'ry wake thy soul,
 And virtue mingle in the ennobled bowl.
 But if like me thro' life's distressful scene,
 Lonely and sad thy pilgrimage hath been,
 And if thy breast with heart-sick anguish fraught,
 Thou journeyest onward tempest-tost in thought,
 Here cheat thy cares—in generous visions melt,
 And dream of goodness thou hast never felt."

Montgomery is a neat town, and pleasantly situated ; but except St. Asaph, it is one of the smallest capital towns in the king's dominions. In the neighbourhood of Welsh Pool, upon a most beautiful eminence, stands Powis castle, formerly called

Pool

Pool castle, from its vicinity to Welsh Pool; it was built A. D. 1110, by Cado-gan ap Bledhyn, who was not long suffered to enjoy it, before he was murdered by his nephew Madoc. Such horrid crimes, however, were so familiar to those days, and so little regarded, that they were frequently committed with impunity, and the offenders might always escape by a fine or dispensation. The castle commands an extensive view of a fertile vale, through which the Severn, yet in its infancy, rolls gently along. The road from thence to Llanvilling is very intricate, and we contrived to lose our way more than once, notwithstanding we had been told it was as straight as an arrow; we wanted about five miles of the latter place, when we met with an honest Cambrian of a very respectable appearance—we did not fail to make some enquiry of

him concerning our road ; he stopped his horse very politely, and informed us that he was then returning from Llanvilling, the place of his nativity, which he had not seen for more than twenty years before ; he added that we should find an excellent inn, and plenty of the best ale in Wales ; he then wished us a pleasant walk, assuring us we should meet with princely accommodations, and earnestly recommending the sign of the *goat*, at the same time advising us to make use of his name, for Owen ap Jones ap Evans was as well known as any name in Wales. I relate this little anecdote to you, because I think the character of a people is best delineated by their actions, and their leading features are as completely developed by an action, or an anecdote of themselves, apparently insignificant, as they could possibly be in five hundred philosophical pages

upon

upon the nature of climate, situation, or government, and the physical causes and effects they may have upon the human genius and disposition. We were much diverted with the whole of our walk to Llanvilling, particularly with the small but pleasant river Verniew, which we crossed. It was late when we arrived, and were much disappointed with respect to those excellent accommodations our honest friend had hinted at, for we could get nothing but dry bread and bad cheese, poor cheer for two hungry travellers that had scarcely eat any thing since breakfast.

Llangunnog is singularly situated, surrounded on all sides by barren and sandy hills. The place consists only of a few houses, amongst which there is a small building ycleped a church, where once a week a sermon is delivered in the Welsh language.

language. Whilst we were at dinner in a little ale-house (which by the bye was the only one in the place), we had a glance at the clergyman, who happened to enter the house at that very time ; his appearance altogether bespoke an inferiority of condition, disgraceful to that respectable body of which he was a member ; upon observing us, he abruptly went out, while our landlady informed us, with an air of triumph, as if he was something superior to the rest of mankind, that “ that was the parson.” He was standing near the house when we went out, and wishing to enter into conversation with him, I desired him to inform me which was the direct road to Bala ; he appeared somewhat confused, and waving his hand towards the way we had enquired for, answered only by the monosyllable “ that,” and walked hastily away. I felt much hurt,

in hurt, and at the same time a great degree of admiration, both at his truly laconic answer, as well as at his manner of address, in which pride seemed to be struggling with poverty; in such a situation any degree of sensibility would be to him rather a misfortune than a blessing. Fixed to a spot in which there could be no one proper for his company, or capable of his conversation, he might be driven to pass his evenings, for the sake of society, with people very far inferior to him, and by degrees lose those finer qualities of the mind, that refinement of action as well as of thought, which properly distinguish the gentleman from the honest but blunt peasant, or the industrious mechanic. I should not have mentioned this circumstance, but that it bears some credible testimony to the common report of the shameful and scanty provision made for the Welsh clergy; which by no means enables them to

to assume that character so essentially necessary to the ministers of christianity. I do not wish to insinuate that there is any disgrace in poverty, but certainly the ignorant and uninstructed too frequently treat their teachers with a respect proportioned to their appearance; and if this be true, it calls loudly for laws and regulations which shall be more favourable to the lower clergy in general. The act of parliament confines the salaries of curates within twelve and fifty pounds per annum, whereas it ought to have been proportioned either to the duty performed, or the value of the benefice itself. Let us take one instance—a curate serves two churches ten miles distant from each other; whilst the incumbent, or vicar, who holds them both, and receives for the joint value of the tithes, five hundred pounds per annum, allows his curate, who does all the duty,

duty, only forty pounds per annum. This cannot be considered as an adequate compensation, even for the labour; and adding the respectability and appearance of the profession, it is indeed contemptible and insignificant *.

Bala is situated upon the borders of a

* The following extract is a singular confirmation of the above statement.

“ The curates of the undernamed places, were lately elected by the trustees of Mr. Stock’s liberal donation, to receive ten pounds each, viz.

The curate of Llanfwrog, in Anglesea, 5 young children, and 25l. per annum.

Ditto of Beguiley and Bettus, Radnorshire, 9 young children, 35l. per annum.

Ditto of Michaelstone Vedow, Monmouthshire, 8 young children, 25l. per annum.

Ditto of Llangadfan, Montgomeryshire, 6 young children, 25l. per annum.

Ditto of Ireby, in Cumberland, 8 young children, 25l. per annum.

Ditto of Llanvair, Monmouthshire, 4 young children, 13l. per annum.

Ditto of Burwarton and Wheathill, Shropshire, 7 young children, 30l. per annum.

Ditto of Abernolish, Caermarthenshire, 8 young children, 18l. per annum.

The

large lake, eleven miles in circumference, and four and a half long. It abounds with pike, perch, trout, and other fish; the country around is grand and sublime, but not interesting; stupendous mountains seem "to mix their heads with dropping clouds," but with respect to cultivation, or even verdure, they are entirely destitute; every necessary article of life is here more than commonly reasonable; fifty pound at Bala would go as far as an hundred in most parts of England. We were yesterday much diverted with a curious political conversation carried on at the inn, in the room which we in part occupied, at a table by ourselves; at another, were

The curate of Sebergham, Cumberland, 8 young children, 30l. per annum.

The curate of Silian, Cardiganshire, 6 young children, 15l. per annum.

This valuable charity is annually given to ten poor curates who have large families; and reflects the highest honour on the worthy donor."

seated

seated the clergyman, the exciseman, the attorney, the apothecary, and I suppose, by his appearance, the barber of the place, &c. these were met upon business over a bowl of punch, which seemed to constitute the chief part of it; whilst in an opposite corner of the room, two more decent looking people were enjoying themselves in a similar manner. The clergyman gave aloud "Church and King," as a toast, and soon after one of our neighbours at the other table, proposed "General Washington" to his friend; this created a great commotion amongst the large party; for the clergyman immediately standing up gave as his second toast "may all *Democrats* be gullotin'd," when the other filling *his* glass, added, "may all fools be gullotin'd, and then I know who'll be the first;" after this ensued a violent and dreadful battle of tongues, in

D

which

which these people excel in an extraordinary degree. The clergyman defended his toast, on the grounds that it shewed his zeal in a good cause, forgetting that it was necessary first to prove the merit of the sentiment, as united by him, and after that, to shew that his zeal was best made known as a clergyman, by his benevolent and truly pious wish. But majors and minors were things which this zealous and humane defender of his church and king had little regard for. The clamour at length became so loud, that we soon withdrew ourselves from the scene of contention, and left the combatants to settle the point in the best manner they could; though it seemed to me that it required more sophistry than the clergyman had displayed, and more wit than the other possessed, to justify or even excuse themselves. From hence the traveller may easily

easily visit the two Arrans, viz. Arran, Mowddwy, and Arran Penllyn, both of them of a stupendous size, but inferior to Snowdon, Cader Idris, or Paenmanmawr. We intend to proceed to-morrow as far as Llangollen; but I will not defer closing a letter which I have imperceptibly lengthened far beyond my original design; and believe me, my dear friend, that I subscribe myself with sincerity,

Your's affectionately, &c.

I.H.

LET-

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LETTER II.

DENBIGH, JULY 14, 1794.

IT was late in the evening when we left Bala, and therefore, contrary to our original intentions, we took up our quarters for the night, at the Druid house, a solitary place only eight miles distant from that which we had last quitted; and early the following morning we pursued our journey to Llangollen. The face of the country now became more interesting. The scene gradually assumed a less rugged appearance; the dark brown mountain, and the desolated heath, softened by distance, formed a beautiful contrast to the wild and irregular scenery that succeeded. We felt our spirits, which had before been depressed from the barren and gloomy country

country we had traversed, now much exhilarated, and we seemed to breathe a freer air. There is an analogy in nature throughout, from the most torpid state of vegetable existence to the most refined subtlety of animal life; and he who has not considered this attentively, will be surpris'd, upon reflection, to perceive that his own self importance is solely derived from the contemplation of external objects; for deprive him of these, shut him out from nature, suppose him to be totally unacquainted with the harmony of this beautiful sphere, he must consider himself in the most contemptible point of view, created for no purpose, endued with powers of perception and reasoning for no possible good; his would be a mere comfortless state of existence, with a mind that could have no adequate idea, if any at all, of the deity; his would be a situa-

tion unworthy the character of his species, and little elevated above the brute creation. Certainly there is a chain of causes and effects throughout every creative world, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal; and all has an effect upon the mind of man. When we approach a desolate and cloud-capt country, an uncultivated and dreary scene, what is the cause that we frequently feel a damp upon our spirits? Why does it affect the mind, as it were, with a leaden weight, and depress the active springs of the imagination? It is from the analogy which nature, under every form she may assume, bears to the varied life of man. Memory backward turns her view, and assimilates the objects before her, to some certain passage of our life, that impresses upon the mind a shade of melancholy or joy, according as those passages may have been

been marked with pleasure, or with pain. It is not therefore that there is any absolute impressiion made upon the mind, from the scene before us, whether it be bright with sunshine, or overcast with clouds, but it is memory which associates to it some event, or transactiion of former years, which, though scarcely perceptible, is the cause of such an effect. Our road wound along the banks of the river Dee, which falls murmuring over its pebbled bed at the foot of the mountains, whose steep sides are covered with wood of the largest growth, here and there the shaggy rock, more than half concealed by the surrounding foliage, peering its broken summit beyond the most extended branches, and threatening, by its fall, to obstruct the course of the river beneath; whilst the spreading beach-tree, and mountain ash, that are found in great abundance upon its banks, dipping
their

their slender branches in the stream, and above all, upon the lofty summit of a conical mountain, the castle Dinas Brân, rising in ruined majesty; at once afford an interesting spectacle of grandeur and sublimity, as well as of beauty and cultivation. Llangollen is most delightfully situated, but the place itself has nothing to boast of, except a very good inn which fortunately belies its appearance. We were entertained, upon our arrival, by a celebrated Welsh harper, who tuned his strings to so Orphean a measure, that a crowd soon collected round the door of our little inn, some of whom began to dance after the rustic fashion of their country; the simplicity of former times struck forcibly upon my mind, and brought back the pleasing recollection of those happy ages, when riches and luxury had not corrupted the heart of man; but when

all

all mankind were brothers, and the interest of one became the interest of all. It afforded me a satisfaction I had never before experienced, to find myself amongst a people, who act with all the simplicity of nature ; totally destitute of the assumed appearance, and artificial manners of more modern times. The Welsh musick assimilates to the genius of the people, and is in general wild and irregular, but often plaintive, and always affecting ; for the harp is perhaps more calculated to express the extremes of passion than any other instrument ; it is astonishing with what skill and execution it is sometimes played upon, and with what enthusiasm the country people listen to it ; insomuch that I have no doubt the fine tones of a Cramer, or a Clementi, would be totally disregarded by these honest people, for the humble strains of a blind Welsh harper. The musical

musical amateur of the present day would despise so vulgar a taste; for with him the Italian school is alone supportable; I dare not therefore profess myself an admirer of simple and unaffected musick, or, in other words, prefer that which penetrates to the heart, to that which goes no farther than the ear; because I should be immediately condemned as a Goth, Vandal, or barbarian. I shall venture however to observe, that it appears to me there can be no absolute criterion of musick; that being the best, which touches the passions, and affects the feelings in the greatest degree, by any assemblage of sounds whatsoever; and if this be true, a Welsh harp, or an Irish bagpipe (*risum teneatis amici*) well executed, is infinitely superior to all the fiddle strings and kettle drums of Italy or Venice.

There are two roads from Llangollen
to

to Wrexham, one on each side of the River Dee; the best is that on the right, which we took; but it is rather the longest. This road is carried upon the high grounds, from whence the prospect is delightful. The river, winding through the valleys, sometimes intercepted by a rising ground or thick wood, then opening full upon the view, the luxuriance of nature is richly displayed through the whole landscape. Upon the hill above us were seen the dark figures of the miners; the confused noise of the men, who were preparing to descend these gloomy caverns, and of the busy team, returning with its ponderous load; while the thick volumes of black smoke, that continued to ascend into a clear and beautiful atmosphere, formed an uncommon and striking contrast. On the other side, the river, stealing through the valley, had, by its
overflowing,

overflowing, contributed to give it the richest appearance of fertility ; in some places the mower, almost buried under the high grass, often paused from his labour ; in others, the sharp sound of the grinding stone, the loud laugh, or toil-subduing song, were frequently heard : on the sides of the opposite hills were scattered the modest hamlets that owned these industrious peasants ; behind us, at some distance, the whitened spire, and part of the little town we had left, were still visible ; whilst over all, the setting sun cast its softened tints, a part of the valley only being shaded by the interposition of a neighbouring mountain, whose summit still retained in glowing colours the last rays of the departing day. On the right, a little farther on, there is a fine view of Chirk castle, and on the left, of Winstay ; the first, the seat of Mr. Middleton,

Middleton, the last of Sir Watkin William Wynne. About half way from Llangollen to Wrexham, we crossed a bridge where the two roads meet, and then we had adieu to the River Dee, which kept its course afterwards to the right of us. Wrexham is a large populous and well built town; there is a very elegant tower belonging to the church, reputed to be a great curiosity. But I have very little pleasure in viewing the works of art; and indeed, human ingenuity of any kind or description, excites rather my admiration than my love: as far as they have contributed to soften the manners of mankind, it is well; but have they not also tended to corrupt and deprave them? If, on the one hand, they have contributed to their wants and conveniences; on the other, they have encouraged the excess, and afforded an unbounded gratification to the

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sensual

sensual passions ; the fine arts, like so many
 handmaids, should ever be ready to attend,
 but not to command; to soften manners,
 but not to render them luxurious.—From
 Wrexham our road became less interest-
 ing; and for ten or twelve miles, present-
 ed nothing to recompence the fatigue of
 a long and tedious walk, until we had as-
 cended a very high hill, when the vale
 of Clwyd, in all its beauty, unfolded upon
 the sight : it appeared like a moving pic-
 ture, upon which nature had been prodi-
 gal of its colours. Hamlets, villages,
 towns, and castles, rose like enchantment
 upon this rich carpet, that seemed covered
 with wood and enclosures; in the midst of
 it, at the distance of about five miles, the
 town of Ruthin, partially appeared from
 the bosom of a most beautiful grove of
 trees ; the vale on each side being bounded
 by a chain of lofty mountains, and far off,

on

on a bold and rugged promontory, stood Denbigh, with its strong fortrefs, the undisputed mistress of this extended scene. The great defect of the vale, is its want of water; the little river Clwyd, which winds through it, not being perceptible at any distance, and in dry seasons quite choaked up; though on the contrary, in wet and rainy weather, it soon overflows the whole country, swelled by the torrents from the surrounding hills*. The land in the vale lying low, and consequently swampy, is, upon a nearer examination, rather coarse. We dined at Ruthin, where there are some remains of a castle, and reached Denbigh yesterday evening. This town is well built,

* This delightful vale is of an oval shape, twenty-six miles in length, and about eight wide in the broadest part; it is wholly bounded with high hills, excepting towards the Irish sea, where it ends in a marsh at Rydland.

Gentleman's Tour through Wales, &c.

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and the principal street which is on the slope of the hill, is broad and clean, but there are very indifferent accommodations to be met with. After tea we took a walk to view the castle, whose venerable walls, rising high above the town, command a magnificent view of the whole vale.

The situation of this castle is admirably described by Churchyard, who lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and wrote his travels through North Wales in familiar verse.

“ This castle stands on top of rocke most hye,
A mightie cragge, as hard as flint or steele;
A massie mount, whose stones so deepe doth lye,
That no device may well the bottome feele.
The rocke descends beneath the auntient towne,
About the which a stately wall goes downe,
With buyldings great, and posternes to the same,
That goes thro’ rocke to give it greater fame.”

It was built in the reign of Edward the
First,

First, and garrisoned, in the time of Charles the First, by the royalists; but was obliged to surrender to the parliament army, after a gallant and vigorous defence; the breaches in the walls are vast, and serve to shew the strength and thickness of their construction. The royal and unfortunate fugitive, Charles the First, after his retreat from Chester, took up his abode for one night in this castle. But it was destined that he should be the first sacrifice to freedom; and neither armies nor castles, walls nor cannon, could protect him from the hands of justice; or prevent an oppressed people from avenging upon him not only his own, but the fœdal despotism, and worse than papal tyranny, of five preceding reigns. Wretched must be that government, and the people that live under it, when it becomes necessary to restrain the encroachments of arbitrary power, at the point of

the sword; or to exact obedience to the will of the sovereign from the cannon's mouth. Denbigh is more of a venerable, than a magnificent ruin, and would, of itself, have amply repaid me for all the fatigue I had undergone; I would not willingly exaggerate the accounts of what I have seen, or endeavour to paint things otherwise, than as they really are; for I am sensible, that the reader too often acquires false ideas of places and things, from the pompous description of the traveller, who thinks himself obliged to relate something of the marvellous, in order that the world may not ridicule him, for crossing seas or traversing deserts, in search of what he might have easily seen at home; and yet it often happens, that scenes, though too highly coloured, may have had that appearance, to the eye of the spectator, at the time he describes them; and that
 what

what appears to him extremely beautiful to-day, may to-morrow strike the imagination in a very different manner; for much depends on the hour of observation, and the temper of mind we are in, to enjoy the objects before us. I cannot avoid relating a ludicrous circumstance, that took place, whilst I was amusing myself with wandering about the castle; and observing the effect of the scenery, through the huge breach, or broken arches, that looked over an almost perpendicular precipice, into the vale below. The moon was just rising in the horizon, when I perceived two gentlemen approach; they seemed to be expatiating upon the beauty of the scene, and in very earnest conversation with each other, one of them frequently repeating parts of Shakespear, which I could not distinctly hear, with a very theatrical tone and action. But I cannot

cannot express to you how much I was delighted, when, upon their nearer approach, I overheard the theatrical gentlemen propose to his companion (as he had brought his flute in his pocket), to retire into a remoter part of the castle, and play some *soft airs*; God bless thee for the thought, said I to myself, amidst these solitary ruins, by the faint light of the moon, to listen to the soft cadence of distant-musick, stealing its mournful melody, on the deluded ear like "sounds of heavenly harmony," must be altogether a soothing and romantic occupation for the mind, accompanied with those pleasing sentiments of melancholy, that are better felt than described. Having chosen a convenient situation, and prepared myself for the supreme pleasure I was about to receive, lo! this romantic disciple of Orpheus, *struck up* the tender air of *Corporal Casey*. I quit-
 ted

ted the castle in an agony of disappointment, and left these romantic gentlemen to enjoy their *soothing concert*, and solitary situation, undisturbed. I returned, however, soon after, and found to my great satisfaction that the coast was clear: nothing could be more awfully grand, than the scene before me, which I surveyed with a degree of admiration, not totally destitute of a superstitious fear. The venerable appearance of the whole fabric; walls, and battlements, rising in ruined majesty; broken arches, half covered by the creeping ivy, and enchanter's nightshade, high gothic windows, which but displayed the horrible gloom that reigned within; the mouldering tower, shook by every storm, affording an asylum to the owl, the bat, and the raven, lone tenants of these desolate mansions; whilst the moon bursting from a dark cloud, threw a partial

partial gleam upon the pile, and served, by its feeble light, to discover the deep gloom of the remoter parts. At the same time, a fearful stillness every where prevailed, except that it was now and then interrupted by low solemn sounds of wind, that seemed to sigh amongst the distant turrets; the intermediate pauses impressing upon my mind a mixture of awe and veneration, which the surrounding scenery greatly contributed to encrease.

The post is going out, so that I have only time to transcribe the following lines upon Denbigh castle, with which I shall close this letter,—Adieu.

UPON THE RUINS OF
DENBIGH CASTLE.

Now sad, and slow, borne far on dusky wing,
Sails the still eve; night from her ebon throne
Slow rising, scatters wide her mystic spells
O'er the tir'd world; and from yon murky clouds
Gleams

Gleams the pale moon, diffusing holy light
 Through many a midnight isle and silent scene.
 Much musing on life's changeful scene, I view,
 Proud pile! thy tempest beaten towers, that rear
 Their heads sublime, and to the angry storm
 Bid bold defiance, though their aged brows
 Bear visible the marks of stern decay;
 While superstition, with a phrensed eye,
 And wildering fear, that horrid forms surveys,
 Affright the lonely wanderer from thy walls.

Far hence thou busy world, nor here intrude
 Thy sounds of uproar, arguing much of care
 And impotent alarms; behold, fond man,
 This feeble monument of mortal pride,
 Where time and desolation reign supreme
 With wildest havoc—o'er the solemn scene
 In silence pause, and mark this pictur'd truth;
 That not alone the proudest works of man
 Must perish; but as this tow'ring fabric,
 That lifts its forehead to the storm, till time
 And the wild winds shall sweep it from its base;
 Pass but a few short hours—the dream of life
 Is fled, and to the cold grave sinks man's faded form.

LET-

LETTER III.

ABBEY, July 16, 1794.

THE last letter which I wrote to you, my dear friend, was dated from Denbigh. I now resume my pen from a spot far different indeed, but not by any means destitute of beauty. We quitted the above-mentioned place with great reluctance, and often looked back upon its venerable ruins, contrasting them in different situations, with the surrounding objects. Intervening hills had scarcely shut them from our view, before we entered upon a wide common, from whence a delightful prospect (terminated only by the sea), lay extended before the eye; on the edge of the common ran the rapid river Elwy, which we crossed, over a
 very

very beautiful bridge, with one noble arch.—The view of the river with its rocky shore, excavated in the most romantic manner—and the simple cottage embosomed within the dark wood that rose above it, formed an interesting perspective section through the arch of this bridge.

St. Asaph is a small neat town, situated upon the declivity of a hill, at the foot of which runs the river Clwyd. About three miles on this side of Holywell, there is a very extensive prospect. From the summit of a hill, we commanded a view of the Dee, incorporating its waters with the ocean. Far beyond, though considerably involved in a thick smoke, appeared Liverpool, the seat of busy commerce; and to the right, Park-gate, a favourite watering place, the abode of
F pleasure,

pleasure, and of song. I could not help smiling at the present appearance of the river Dee, compared with what it was when I formerly beheld it; at that time unconscious of its future greatness, it murmured over its craggy bed, or smoothly glided through the meadows and rich pastures, where numerous herds of cattle were feeding, or seeking to allay the sultry heat, in the midst of the stream. Many humble cottages rose upon its banks, presenting interesting pictures of content and happiness; children busily employed in picking floss from the bushes that hung over the stream, or amusing themselves with throwing pebbles into the water, thus sporting with time, and "reckless that age and sorrow with icy hand hung over them." In another place a rough alpine bridge, thrown across the river, afforded a precarious passage to the cottager,

cottager, in haste to reach his simple home, and share with his little family the produce of his daily toil.—Far different did it now strike the eye:—a noble river pouring its mighty waters into the bosom of the ocean; towns and cities rising upon its shores, big with the vanities of man, and fleets of merchantmen proudly floating in with the tide, laden with the wealth of the world.

Holywell is a clean built town, surrounded by a most beautiful country. There is a manufacture established at this place, that once gave bread to thousands, but alas! the loom is now forsaken for the sword, and the busy roof of industry exchanged for the sickly tent.

The town and neighbourhood, as might be expected, abound with numbers of

poor women and children, who are half starving, whilst their husbands, fathers, and brothers, are gloriously signalizing themselves in the service of their country; and if by chance the ruthless sword of war should spare the poor man's life, and send him to his long wished-for home, with the trifling loss of a leg, or an arm, he will at least have the consolation of reflecting that he might have lost them both; and should his starving family, in the bitterness of want, by chance reproach him for his incapacity to relieve them, he will no doubt silence their murmurs, and turn their sorrow into joy, by reminding them, that it was in the glorious cause of their king and country that they suffered. But not to treat with levity a subject so very serious, let us take another example; the poor soldier, who at the conclusion of a long war, reduced

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by famine, sickness, and fatigue, and disabled by cruel wounds, is finally compelled to drag on a miserable existence in an hospital, or a work-house; or is returned upon the wide world, without hope, and void of expectation, a burden to himself, and useless to all around him. It would be pale and sickly consolation to his drooping spirits, to be informed that his were wounds and sufferings worthy of a soldier and a man, because they were acquired in his country's cause. Humanity must weep over victory when purchased upon such terms, and tremble for the fatal effects of desolating war, whereby immediate misery is occasioned to thousands, and eventual sorrow inflicted upon millions.

What hope for man! o'erwhelming war,

Uncommon furies in his train,

O'er heaps of carnage rolls his car,

And Europe mourns her thousands slain:

What hope! amidst disastrous days
 * When freedom's temple totters to its base,
 And with earth's vilest brood dishonoured science strays†.

The author, in his beautiful ode, has finely introduced this apostrophe, to the unfortunate situation of his country, involved in a calamitous and destructive war abroad; and its happiness and tranquillity subverted and destroyed at home by the real or pretended existence of plots and conspiracies, it matters not which, for they are equally to be lamented; because they have, in either case, been the cause of suspending the great bulwark of English liberty, the Habeas Corpus Act; and of giving rise to many arbitrary measures, which nothing but the most absolute necessity could justify. He

* Alluding to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and to the fate of Muir and Palmer.

† Ode on a distant prospect of Cambridge.

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has also expressed his indignation at that severity of punishment, almost unequalled in history, which was inflicted upon two men, whose real intentions *deserved applause* instead of disgrace*.

The well of the virgin St. Winifred is well known for its singular virtue of curing the blind, the lame, and the palsied. Innumerable are the trophies of old crutches, wheel-barrows, spades, &c. that decorate this venerable building; the grateful testimonies of those various cures

* The author of these letters does not mean to throw out any reflection upon the criminal laws of England. It is well known that the law which banished Muir and Palmer for fourteen years, composed part of the Scotch jurisprudence. The author is convinced that the *common law* of this land is its greatest glory, that it is a sword to the guilty, and a shield to the oppressed; and that as long as the *Habeas Corpus* Act remains unviolated, and the *trial by jury* pure and independant, no time or tyranny can ever efface the liberties of his country.

which

which its miraculous waters have performed. The story is as follows:

“ St. Winifred, a beautiful and devout virgin, having fled from a young man called Cradock, the son of a king named Alane, who would have dishonoured her, he pursued and overtook her near the church, where, on her refusal to yield to his desires, he with his sword cut off her head. On the spot where it fell, there suddenly sprang up a fair well, yielding a vast quantity of exceeding clear water, yet famous for its wondrous virtues in healing diverse diseases; at the bottom of the well are to be seen stones spotted with blood, which stains, cannot be effaced, and round its sides grows moss of a marvellous sweet odour.

“ St. Bueno, a holy man, coming from
the

the church to the spot where the body lay, and finding the murtherer, who had not power to move from thence, he first replaced the head, and then by his prayers raised Winifred to life, and struck Craddock suddenly dead, whose body turning black, was instantly conveyed away by fiends; soon after St. Bueno going to Ireland, ordered St. Winifred to send him an annual token, which was to be put on the stream of the well, from whence it would be carried to his place of residence, fifty miles beyond the sea."

Rudland is remarkable for its castle. The founder, as well as the precise time in which it was founded, is quite uncertain. It is situated upon the banks of the Clwyd

Abergeley is a small watering place,
about

about half a mile from the sea.—They have a strange custom there, that has an air of great indelicacy to a stranger; which is, that the inferior orders of people commonly bathe, without the usual precautions of machines or dresses; nor is it singular to see ten or a dozen of both sexes promiscuously enjoying themselves in the lucid element, regardless, or rather unconscious, of any indecency. Not being myself accustomed to this mode, I chose to retire farther up; but it is very unpleasant bathing, being a flat level beach, and necessary to wade a quarter of a mile into the sea before one can arrive at any comfortable depth.

The approach to Conway, from the opposite side of the water, is extremely grand. The castle (built by Edward the First, A. D. 1284.) stands upon a rock,
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the foot of which is washed by "Conway's foaming flood." I there paid a visit to the tombs of my ancestors, some of whom lie buried in the church belonging to the town. Observe that this visit must not be attributed to superstition, or ought of peculiar veneration for their memory, but the effect of mere curiosity; for there is a singular monument of one of them, who was the father of forty-one children, by two wives. I took down the inscription with a pencil, and then left my prolific ancestor to his uninterrupted repose.

We strengthened our party at Conway by the addition of two of our particular acquaintance, whose plan being similar to our own, we united our interests, and set out from Conway, each provided with a stick, knapsack, and trowsers. We certainly presented to the astonished Cambrians a very formidable appearance; sometimes

sometimes exciting their risible muscles, and sometimes being the occasion of much alarm, particularly amongst the children, who always took us for Frenchmen; but the country people, in general, looked upon us as recruits. Our walk to Abber was singularly beautiful; this road was formerly almost impassable, but with incredible labour and expence, it has of late years been rendered more commodious. The deep and gloomy passes between the stupendous mountains, that seemed ready to close over our heads, had an appearance truly terrible and grand; and almost induced me to give credit to what Camden has asserted,—that two shepherds might converse together upon opposite mountains, and be a day before they could meet. The pass of Paenman Mawr, that was once attended with so much danger to the wary traveller, is now perfectly safe. We arrived late in the evening

ing at Abber, which consists but of three or four houses; the inn is very commodious, but, at the same time, the accommodations are rather extravagantly purchased. We rose early the following morning for the purpose of ascending to the top of Paenman Mawr, and ordered dinner to be ready for us at two o'clock, expecting to have returned by that hour; but we reckoned without our host, for the expedition took up nearly the whole of the day, and we thought ourselves happy to return when we did.—We rashly took the resolution to venture up this stupendous mountain without a guide, and therefore unknowingly fixed upon the most difficult part to ascend, and consequently were continually impeded by a vast number of unexpected obstructions. At length we surmounted every danger and difficulty, and safely arrived at the top; but

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the fatigue we had undergone, and the excessive heat of the day, deprived us, in a great degree, of that pleasure we should otherwise have received from the prospect, and occasioned a tormenting thirst that we were not able to gratify; for water was an article which we searched for in vain. Preparing, in the utmost despondency, to descend, we accidentally turned over a large flat stone that concealed a little spring, which, thus obstructed, became absorbed under the surface of the earth. The parched-up soldier of Alexander's army could not have felt greater joy in the discovery of his little treasure, than we did of ours. In the course of our descent we incautiously separated; and as it was dusk, I began to be under some apprehension that we might lose ourselves in the intricacies of the mountain; in order to discover their direction, or distance from

me,

me, I frequently repeated their names, and was much entertained with a beautiful echo, which returned the sound of my voice in three different directions; had I been inclined to superstition, many circumstances would have contributed to raise its full effect upon my mind, which as it was, busily employed itself in creating images of fear. An awful silence succeeded the last vibrations of the echo, which was only interrupted by the distant barking of the watch dog, that proceeded from the lonely hut of the shepherd; or the shrill shrieks and hootings of the owl and rock eagle.—In the midst of my melancholy cogitations, I fully expected that the genius of the mountain would have appeared to me in some formidable shape, and have reproached me with rashly presuming to disturb the sacred silence of his solitary reign; or at least that some ban-

ditti, more terrible in aspect than ever Salvator Rosa could have painted, or even imagined, would have rushed upon me from behind a rock, and made me pay, perhaps with life, for my unintentional temerity. We had the good fortune, however, to arrive at the inn together, nearly at the same time, that is to say, about nine o'clock. You may easily imagine that the difficulties we had previously encountered, heightened the enjoyments of our present situation, and we passed a very pleasant evening in discoursing upon the adventures of the day. There is a cataract about a mile from Abber, worth seeing, on account of its precipitous fall; but it is totally destitute of wood or scenery. This evening we mean to cross the ferry into the Isle of Anglesea, but I will reserve the account of this part of our journey until another opportunity, or
till

till the experience of new adventures
may render a repetition acceptable.—In
the mean time believe me, my dear friend,
under every circumstance of time or place,
I shall still continue my best wishes for
your happiness, and remain

Your's sincerely, &c.

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LETTER IV.

CAERNARVON, July 19, 1794.

SINCE my last, my dear friend, I have encountered some difficulties both by land and water, and am, in consequence, come to a final determination in my own mind, that terra firma is infinitely preferable to that changeable element where Neptune holds his powerful sway. I must acknowledge the dangers of the latter are not by any means so agreeable, nor can I view them with that tranquillity which, upon most occasions, I have treated the former; not indeed that I am blessed with any great share of philosophy, although I am always toiling to acquire a little of that necessary ingredient to human happiness ;

but

but alas ! the irritation which such exercise has upon my nerves, is so hostile to the object in view, that it drives philosophy to a very respectful distance. In the uncertain voyage of life, some sail upon troubled, others on smooth and gentle waters, and some again on stagnant; and it is our duty to expect to encounter all sorts of weather : man is at the best but a weak being, like a reed to be shaken by every wind, and buffeted about by every storm ; some are better sailors than others, and look upon the angry tempest with different degrees of fortitude ; for my part I must honestly confess that I am at the best but a bad navigator, and am often run ashore with only a cap full of wind.

The following anecdote which I have accidentally met with, is so singular, that I cannot refrain from sending it to you :

A merchant who lived in the golden days
of

of Queen Elizabeth, had seven or eight sons arrived at the age of manhood, and being himself upon his death bed, addressed them as follows: "Sons," said he (after some previous discourse), "your voyage through life may be compared to an outward bound fleet in time of war, that has a safe convoy to a certain latitude, where they usually separate, and take different courses; some navigate one sea, some another, and naturally meeting with various fortunes, one encounters storms and tempests; another runs upon shoals and quicksands; and a third, even in sight of port, strikes upon a rock, and is lost; whilst few, very few, smoothly sailing upon the tranquil tide, gain their destined haven in peace. So, my sons, I, your convoy, have conducted you even thus far with honor and safety to yourselves: I must now leave you for ever, in all probability to be scattered wide by many fates; let each, whatever
course

course he may steer, have virtue for his pilot, and I trust that his faithless fortunes—;" but here the story breaks off, and so must I, in order to make an apology, which, according to the polite rules of writing should now follow, for this unnecessary digression.—And methinks I hear you say, I am travelling 'tis true; but it is into the regions of fancy, beyond the reach of common apprehensions; I allow the justice of the charge, and stand self convicted; but I find it a very hard task to keep within due bounds: for, to pursue the allegory—in the course of a voyage, if the master of the vessel happens to discover a beautiful island, abounding with all sorts of fruit, is he a criminal, or even an injudicious pilot, if he is tempted to deviate from his direct track, in order to gather some? Or if he hears a Syren's voice, is he to blame in listening to it? when

when to resist, the expedient of Ulysses would be insufficient—he must also shut out the imagination.

The village of Abber Conway, usually called Abber, from whence I dated my last letter, is situated upon the straits of the Menai, that at high tide is there about four miles across; but when the water is out, it appears perfectly dry; for the sea retires so far back, that it only leaves a channel of a quarter of a mile, or thereabouts, in breadth: all the rest is a complete flat, and consequently the tide overflows it very rapidly. There are stated times to pass this ferry, which one should be very exact in observing, for ten minutes may be of the utmost consequence. The clergyman of the place accompanied us to the boundaries of this wilderness of sand; he gave us the necessary directions for

for our passage, which were only to keep a white house in view that belonged to the ferryman on the Anglesea shore, and to make what haste we could, since there was no time to lose, for we had four miles to walk over this frightful desert without shoes or stockings, having been advised to pull them off; for being regularly overflowed every twelve hours, great part of the road is necessarily wet and dirty. We had scarcely got half way, before it began to grow thick and foggy. The little village of Abber, which we had just quitted, was no longer perceptible; and nothing behind us was to be seen, but the steep and shaggy mountains of Paenman Mawr, and those known by the general name of Snowdonia, with the dark vapours floating upon their sides; and very soon even these became no longer distinguishable, but as one huge mass of clouds.

clouds. Myself, and another of the party, had considerably outwalked the other two, who had lost sight of their landmark, and were steering their course much too far to the right; when we discovered their mistake they were not so visible to us, that we could tell what they were; all that we could discern, was something very dark, moving in a different direction to us; consequently we hailed them, and waited till they came up to us, and we agreed to part company no more.—Darkness had now overtaken us in good earnest, and we could see nothing, nor hear any thing, except the noise which the sea made in its approach, that alarmed us not a little; at length, to our infinite satisfaction, we distinguished the voices of the ferrymen, who were luckily waiting on this side of the passage. When they heard us, they were extremely impatient
for

for our arrival, and continually called to us to make haste, which we wanted no monitor to urge us to do ; we therefore made towards the spot from whence the sounds came, which we conjectured to be about the distance of two hundred yards from us, but were unluckily intercepted by a small channel, already filling very fast with the sea. We did not hesitate long, for in fact we had no alternative, and therefore boldly ventured through ; it was fortunately only about two feet deep, and rather more than ten yards broad. We congratulated each other upon finding ourselves safe in the boat, though dripping wet, and shivering with cold. Like the Israelites, we had passed through the sea on dry land ; but we had run a great risk of experiencing a similar treatment with Pharaoh and his host, from that unmannerly element. When we arrived at

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the

the inn at Beaumaris, we made a fire that would have roasted an ox, and ordered a supper sufficient for ten aldermen. Upon opening the window on the following morning, I observed the sea had covered all those immense flats we had so lately, I will not say with dry feet, walked over.

The first Edward, ambitious of emulating the actions of Alexander the Great, entertained the daring project of building a bridge across these straits, and thus unite Anglesea with Wales. That proud monarch, like the insolent Xerxes, vainly conceived he could control the raging elements ; and the trouble, expence, and impracticability of completing so vast a work, was clearly, but in vain, represented to him : chance, however, effected what reason had been unable to do ; for at the

very

very time that he was giving orders for the undertaking, some fresh disturbances broke out elsewhere, and diverted his attention from so wild and visionary a scheme.

Beaumaris is a dirty sea-faring town; here is another of king Edward's castles built, A. D. 1295; it is in tolerable preservation, but the eye is disgusted with new repairs; a fine old tower is frequently patched with modern masonry, in which the workman has barbarously shown his art, in the nice disposition of yellow bricks and mortar: add to this, the inhabitants have made a bowling-green within its walls.—The guardian genii of venerable ruins, must surely have been asleep when these impieties were committed.

From Beaumaris we crossed the island, with which I felt myself greatly disappointed; I looked around me in vain for those awe inspiring shades and venerable temples where the Druids used to perform their mysterious rites, that filled the wondering multitude with fear, and infused, even into their enemies, a degree of respect and veneration.

The account given by Tacitus of the expedition of Suetonius, against this island, is the most striking picture of the character of the Druids, and probably more to be relied upon than any other; for veracity constituted no small part of the merit of that excellent historian.

* "Igitur monam insulam incolis va-

* Tacit Annal Lib. 14.

lidam,

lidam, et receptaculum perfugarum ag-
gredi parat.

Stabat pro litore diversa acies, densa ar-
mis virisque, intercurfantibus feminis: in
modum furiarum, veste ferali, crinibus
disiectis, faces præferebant. Druidæque
circum, preces diras sublati ad cælum
manibus fundentes, novitate aspectus per-
culere milites, ut quasi hærentibus mem-
bris, immobile corpus vulneribus præbe-
rent. Dein cohortationibus ducis, et se
ipsi stimulantes, ne muliebri et fanaticum
agmen pavescerent, inferunt signa, ster-
nuntque obvios, et igni suo involvunt."

"He thereupon prepares to attack
Mona, an island powerful on account of
its numerous inhabitants, and affording a
place of refuge to those who fled from the
enemy.

- - - a motley army stood opposed

to him upon the shore, thronged with warriors and prepared with warlike instruments, the women running up and down, and bearing torches before them, after the manner of the furies, in the dress worn at their funeral solemnities, and with dishevelled hair ; the Druids every where pouring forth the most dreadful imprecations, with hands uplifted to heaven, terrified the soldiers with the novelty of such a spectacle, who, as if fixed to the spot where they stood, yielded their bodies immoveable to the wounds of their enemy. At length, at the exhortations of the general, and also encouraging each other, that they should not be intimidated at that female and frantic multitude, they advance their standards, overthrow all who oppose them, and plunge the Britons into their own fires."

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By the bye this last was an act of the most unjust and unnecessary cruelty in the Romans, who seem only to have been instigated to it by the demons of revenge; for when we consider that the deluded multitude who opposed their invasion, were in reality fighting in defence of every thing that was valuable in their domestic, and of every thing that was dear and venerable in their public life; that they beheld the temples of their gods impiously polluted, and their sacred groves violated and profaned; can we feel surprised, or rather was it not natural that they should resist the fury of an enemy, preparing to trample upon their rights, their liberties, and their religion? And if in general, we regard the conduct of the Romans with respect to the conquered nations, we shall find that the most cruel and rapacious spirit characterised all their military

military transactions. They led the unhappy victims of their persecution in barbarous triumph to the capital, and felt a more than brutal pleasure in listening to the groans of the untaught and defenceless children of nature, the naked inhabitants of the wilds and forests of the most uncivilized and unpromising regions. Their inhumanity and cruelty is only to be equalled, in more modern times, by the conquest of Peru and Mexico, and the taking of the island of St. Domingo by the Spaniards, which has fixed an indelible blot of infamy upon that nation; and by that disgraceful and abominable traffic that subsists to this day in the West, of bartering our fellow creatures at a public auction, and subjecting them to the disgraceful dominion of the most unfeeling of tyrants.

Very

Very few traces of the temples and habitations of the Druids are now to be found; some old stones, shapeless and without order, here and there, indicate that there might have stood on these spots the rude and simple piles, where the primæval inhabitants of this island solemnised their religious ceremonies; and this is all that now remains of that once celebrated order of priesthood, which overspread the northern regions of Europe. Strange fatality! that a system of religion so founded on prejudice, and rivetted in superstition and ignorance, and so intimately blended with the political governments of those times, that it appeared capable of triumphing over that invisible mutation to which all human establishments are liable, and of opposing Christianity itself, should now be so lost, so forgotten, that little more than a few shapeless

less stones, and the uncertain testimony of oral tradition, remain to satisfy us of the influence that extraordinary religion once possessed over the human mind:

“ Illi rebus divinis interfunt, sacrificia publica ac privata procurant, religiones interpretantur

- - - fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque constituunt, si quod est admissum facinus, si cædes facta, si de hereditate, si de finibus controversia est iidem decernunt, præmia pœnasque constituunt *.”

“ They preside over all sacred ceremonies; they administer both public and private sacrifices; they are the interpreters of all religious affairs - - -

- - - They for the most

* Cæsar in Gall, Lib. 6.

part

part decide in all public and domestic controversies; if any crimes are committed, if any slaughter is made, whether they are disputes concerning hereditary right, or the boundaries of their possessions, the Druids always decide upon them; they also determine rewards and punishments."

This is a general account given by Julius Cæsar of the Druids of Gaul. He slightly mentions those of Britain; only taking occasion to observe, that the manners and ceremonies of these people are almost every where the same. Their powers of divination were also in great reputation, but the mode of making their observations was truly horrid and barbarous. Their ceremonies, according to Tacitus, were performed "in groves, sacred to the most cruel superstitions; for they offered up their sacrifices upon altars
stained

stained with the blood of their captives ; and it was usual for them to augur according as the blood of the human victim followed the sacred knife that had inflicted the wound."

Anglesea (though it is called the granary of Wales) appeared to us as one continued picture of desolation ; and for twenty miles of our road through it, we could not discover more than five or six corn fields, and the grass land so miserably poor, that it starved rather than fed its hungry inhabitants. We undoubtedly did not see the country to the best advantage, because the excessive heat of the summer had parched up the ground, and occasioned a general appearance of dearth.

"Amlwch is a small sea port, from whence the copper (that is found in the Paris and Mona mines, which are not
more

more than a mile from the town), is shipped to London, Liverpool, &c. The Mona mine produces the finest ore; they also make quantities of copper from old iron (for a particular account of the whole process, see the Scotch Encyclopedia, Pennant's History of Wales, &c.)

These mines have an appearance uncommonly grand and striking—a vast yawning chasm, displaying full to the view of the astonished stranger its sulphurous contents; hundreds of workmen employed in a variety of different occupations; some boring shafts, others selecting the ore, which is slung up to the top, or, if I may use such an expression, ushered into the world in little baskets. In some places the chisel and the pick-axe find room for employment; in others the men are sedulously engaged in blowing

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ing up large pieces of the rock by means of gunpowder, the report of which reverberating from side to side, in this immense cavity, occasions such a tremendous explosion, that all nature seems to tremble to its center.—Upon the whole these mines bear an apt resemblance to the infernal regions, and, like the pestilence from the pit of Acheron, the sulphur which issues from them, spreads desolation around, so that not the slightest vestiges of verdure are to be traced in the neighbouring fields.

We dined yesterday at Gwyndn, on the great road to Holyhead, which is called by the natives *Caer Guby*, on account of *St. Kybi*, a holy man, who lived there A. D. 308; but none of us expressing any inclination to see that place, we left it on the right, and steered our course
nearly

nearly South, through the center of the island. Gwyndn signifies, from its name, a place of hospitality at the expence of the lord ; and, in truth, it answers, in some respects, to its title even now ; nor must I forget to pay my tribute of thanks to the hostess, a fine old lady, who payed us the utmost attention, and appeared particularly solicitous about us ; she gave us her blessing at our departure, with a thousand admonitions not to lose ourselves. We left this hospitable inn with regret, and arrived "post multa pericula," at Hoel Don Ferry, a single house, where we were obliged to sleep, or, speaking more accurately, to lie down, for to sleep was totally impossible. It was a miserable hut ; but we contrived to procure two beds, though the good woman was for putting us all into one. We crossed the ferry yesterday morning, after a sleepless night,

happy to quit this inauspicious island, where fortune had not been over prodigal to us of her favours. The road from this ferry to Caernarvon, winds along the shores of the Menai, and the scenery would have amply repayed me for the fatigue and mortification I had undergone, had I then been in a humour to have enjoyed it; but true it is, that when we cannot enjoy ourselves, we are not much disposed to be satisfied with any thing around us; the finest objects lose their beauty; and what at other times would have afforded the highest gratification, are in those hours deprived of their relish. We reached Caernarvon, or *Caer-ar-fon* (signifying a walled town), to breakfast; and it was not until I had eaten, or rather devoured, a certain quantity of toast and butter, that I began to recover the accustomed tone of my spirits. I intended to have closed this

letter

letter with an account of our transactions as far as the time of our departure from this place ; but must defer the remainder till my next, for some particular business has fallen upon my hands, which obliges me for the present to subscribe myself,

Your's, &c.

I. H.

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LET.

LETTER V.

TAN-Y BWLCH, July 24, 1794.

OF all the ruins which Wales has yet presented to me, the castle of Caernarvon is the most noble and magnificent. "Vast as the pride of its founder," it evinces the warlike and invincible genius of the first Edward, of whose military prowess this country, as well as Scotland, furnish such numerous and melancholy proofs. Thank heaven, these fabricks of despotism are at length either levelled with the ground, or present a memorable lesson to mankind of the futility of human ambition.

This castle was erected in order to secure the passage into the Isle of Anglesea, and to curb the people of the mountains,
where

where the brave and hardy Britons had taken refuge from their insulting conquerors, resolved to prefer freedom and independance to ease and servitude. The eldest son of Edward was born here, and he was presented to the Welsh as their future prince. Such enormous buildings, abstractedly considered, excite only my abhorrence; because they have occasioned the exercise of a great deal of tyranny, and useless expence, and have been of no possible advantage to any nation; but have, on the contrary, afforded so many asylums wherein the sword of tyranny might take shelter; and were chiefly calculated to keep the surrounding districts in awe and subjection. Every castle that now remains is a monument of shame to our ancestors, and of the ignoble bondage under which they bent: and hence in part arises that satisfaction, which the
mind

mind is conscious of feeling, in contemplating their ruins; for an association naturally takes place; and the recollection of the feudal vassalage and slavery of former days, is accompanied by the pleasing circumstances of the relative prosperity and freedom which we now enjoy. From this place we made a party of three, and crossed once more into Anglesea, where my ill stars seemed to have pre-ordained that I should meet with nothing but misfortunes. One of my companions was a very skilful botanist, and his botanical furor induced him at all times to despise danger and difficulty, when in pursuit of a favourite plant, and this was the object of our present enterprize; but we had scarcely set foot on that inhospitable shore, before it began to rain with great violence, and very soon growing dark, we were obliged to make the best of our way

way back again. This ferry is two miles across, and the water was much agitated, so that without the addition of the rain, which came down in torrents, the spray of the sea would have completely made us wet through; but, in the midst of our distress, we were agreeably interested by a sight as beautiful to us as it was novel; the surface of the water suddenly assumed a luminous appearance, now and then relapsing into an impenetrable gloom, and then again re-luminated, it conveyed to the mind some idea of what the poets describe of Phlegethon in the shades below. By the time we had reached our inn I had lost my voice, and gained a fore-throat; the following morning it was no better; but under some hope that exercise would cure the complaint, was induced to continue our tour to Bethkelert, which we reached that afternoon;

ternoon; the whole walk being more singularly romantick than any I had yet seen, and compelled us to make many a pause, in order to enjoy and contemplate its beauties. About half way, we passed over Llyngwennyn bridge, and immediately found ourselves in a fertile valley, terminated by a wild and irregular cascade, one branch of which contributed to turn a mill that was almost concealed within the wood, which formed a kind of amphitheatre to this picturesque and interesting scene; a little further on a fine lake opened full upon the view; and not far from this another smaller one. The road winds along the banks of both. Bethkelert is a small village, or rather hamlet, situated at the foot of some prodigious high mountains, which seem to encircle it on all sides, whilst the stream or torrent, that had accompanied us all the

the way from the first lake, here begins to be of more consequence, and forcing its way between these stupendous hills, with a continued and considerable descent, empties itself into an arm of the sea, called Traweth Mawr. As this is the usual place from which travellers make the ascent of Snowdon, we determined to do the same, and in pursuance of this resolution set off at eleven in the evening, though it was quite dark, and a very rainy and stormy night; however, there was a probability that it would be fine in the morning; and that hope was sufficient to make us undergo a few inconveniences; but in attempting to find the guide's house, which was five miles from our inn, and situated quite out of the road, at the foot of the mountain, we became completely bewildered: in this perplexity we were directed by the glimmering

mering of a light to an habitation, which, with extreme difficulty and dange , we contrived to reach. It was a small hut, and its inhabitants, if we might judge from the impenetrable silence that reigned within it, were all asleep. It was some time before we could prevail upon them to open the door, and answer to our entreaties for a proper direction ; at length an elderly man appeared, to whom we endeavoured to make known our grievances ; but alas ! he only spoke his native language, and did not understand a word that we said : However, by frequently repeating the guide's name, " Ellis Griffith," and pointing to Snowdon, at the same time giving him a glimpse of a shilling, we with much difficulty made him comprehend us ; and putting himself at our head, he became our conductor. In about half an hour we found ourselves
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at the door of another small cottage: our guide vociferated Welsh for some minutes, till we were admitted by a good-looking lad about 17 years of age, who was the person we had been searching for: he remonstrated against our ascending that night, with many weighty reasons, to which we easily assented; but to think of returning to our inn would be madness: we therefore called a council of war, and it was agreed, that we should at all events stay where we were, until morning; when, if it should be tolerably fair, we would ascend. Thus determined, we disposed of ourselves in the following manner; I barricadoed myself in a chair, so that I could not fall out; two more reposed themselves on the benches on each side of the fire, and the fourth took up his "lodgings on the cold ground," with an earthen platter turned up-side

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down

down for his pillow. As for my part I was not disposed to sleep, but took up the rush-light, which had been placed for security on the ground; and to pass away the leaden hours of time, pored over an old Welsh dictionary (which was the only thing like a book that I could find), till I was scarcely able to see. I could not help contemplating our singular situation and appearance in this strange place: on one side, around the dying embers of a peat fire, my good friends were enjoying as comfortable a repose as they had ever experienced in the most costly bed: at the other extremity of the room, separated only by a rug, the venerable owners of this humble cottage lay locked in each others embraces: whilst I, like Brutus in his tent at Philippi, sat reading by the mid-night lamp, till the light danced before my eyes, and the pale spectre of the

the night appeared to my imagination. Without doors nought but the "pelting of the pitiless storm" was heard, and the loud roar of the mountain torrents: I recollected some lines of a favorite author, which I thought applicable to my present situation;

"And when rude blust'ring winds and driving rain,
Prevent my willing feat;
Be mine the hut that from the mountains side
Views wild and swelling floods." COLLINGS,

Yet while I was contemplating the scene, under such peculiar circumstances, with a mixture of awe and surprise, these simple cottagers lay perfectly indifferent, and unconscious of any novelty in their situation. The noise of the cataract was by them scarcely ever remarked, or served to strengthen their repose; mountain floods, abrupt and broken precipices,

pices, were alike viewed by them with the utmost indifference; so soon does the human mind become familiar, and accommodate itself to any circumstances. Habit and custom are even so powerful as to change the very complexion of things, and render that finally pleasing, which at first could not be viewed without fear or dislike. The Savoyard will climb from rock to rock, and fearless walk upon the brink of tremendous precipices, which we, unaccustomed to such scenes, cannot contemplate, even at a distance, without emotion; but, in a little time, we become familiar to them, and ridicule those fears we had formerly entertained, for what we can now view with so much unconcern.

- At four in the morning I thought it prudent to awaken the whole party, which

which I effected with some difficulty; we then sallied from our habitation, and made our observations upon the weather, which gave us no encouragement to proceed; however, they determined to venture upon their aerial excursion, more from the hope of finding the plants, for which this mountain is remarkable, than of seeing any thing when at the top: at their persuasions, added to my own inclination, I declined the enterprize, as my cold had considerably increased during the night, and went back again to the inn, where I impatiently expected their return, which did not happen till four in the afternoon. It turned out, as might have been foreseen, a fruitless and fatiguing expedition; for when arrived at the top, they could see nothing but the impenetrable clouds, that almost constantly envelope these huge mountains.

We quitted Bethkelart the following morning, and pursued the course of the same stream I have above spoken of; that for nearly two miles rolls with great rapidity at the foot of prodigious high mountains, which rise on each side of it, almost perpendicular from its banks, leaving but barely room for a narrow road, which must have been cut at a vast expence. The gentle and murmuring sounds of the water, occasioned by its declivity, and the obstructions it has to overcome, form a rude but grateful harmony. Pont Aber Glaslyn terminates this sublime scene. The bridge, and surrounding objects, are here highly deserving of attention. From hence we steered our course to the left, and traversed the wildest and most desolate country that North Wales can boast of; for the most part consisting of vast hills, rising one above another, covered
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with shaggy rocks, without the slightest vestiges of verdure. We reached this place yesterday evening : I am delighted with the situation, which is the most retired and pleasing I have ever seen ; it stands upon the borders of a valley sufficiently high to command a view of its whole extent ; the Druryd, a small, but interesting stream, winding its solitary course, undisturbed, through the midst of it ; and, at the lower extremity, a simple, but elegant bridge, terminates the view. The woods are very picturesque, and cover the opposite hills to a great extent ; gratifying the eye with a constant variety. Why, my dear friend, has nature placed her most alluring haunts, her most delightful scenes, so far from the reach of man ? Why has she prodigally squandered away upon so many distant and uncivilized regions, and upon this favoured country in particular, all her majestic

jesty and simplicity? Why has she given to
 a people, who behold, without enjoyment,
 scenes of beauty, where, for my part, I
 could be almost content to pass through
 this strange scene called life, in peace and
 solitude? I know you will blame me for
 thus giving way to visions, which ought
 not to be realized, and your answer I al-
 ready anticipate (viz.) that man was not
 made for solitude, or selfish enjoyments.
 That our brother travellers, through this
 tedious journey, call for our assistance, and
 have a claim upon our exertions; and
 that nature would no longer please, no
 longer afford delight and gratification in
 her works, if they were every where
 equally beautiful; or, in other words, were
 there not barren mountains, smoky cities,
 ungenial soils, and unwholesome climates;
 then would lakes, woods, rivers, fertile
 valleys, cultivated plains, villages, and
 hamlets,

hamlets, be no longer objects of curiosity or admiration.

The inn at Tan y Bwlch is remarkably neat and commodious; we yesterday made an excursion from hence, to view the fall of the Cynfael, one of the most celebrated cataracts in Wales. With much difficulty and danger I climbed up to its tremendous and almost unattainable summit; from whence the water, collected into a body, falls tumbling from rock to rock, and steep to steep, till it reaches a vast pool, or bason, frightfully deep, and so remarkably clear, that the pebbles at the bottom of it may be distinctly perceived, though I could form no judgment of its depth. The scenery at the foot of the cataract, was beyond imagination beautiful; but I will not attempt to give you a particular description of it, because I have

have neither time nor power to do it justice. We leave this place to-morrow morning, and you may conclude, after what I have said, it will be with sorrow and regret. I shall now close this long, and I fear, tedious letter, and be assured, I feel myself as much as ever,

Your sincere Friend,

I. H.

LET-

LETTER VI.

ABERISTWITH, July 29, 1794.

THIS is the last letter, my dear friend, that I shall have the pleasure of writing to you whilst I am in Wales; an unexpected event obliges me to be at Bath in a few days, so that I am under a necessity of leaving this country sooner than I had intended; but I will take care and write to you as soon as I arrive, with the remainder of my tour, together with a few observations upon the character of the people.

It was with much difficulty we found our way to Harlech. We made some enquiries at a small village, but in vain; for though we addressed ourselves to many,
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we could by no means make them understand us; all we received in return was a stare, immediately followed by a grin, and concluded with a "tin farcenick," which signifies "no Saxon." We were obliged therefore to rely upon chance for our guide, which did not however upon this occasion befriend us; for, instead of keeping to the right upon the hills, we pursued the left path, that brought us into an extensive vale, or marsh, where, at the distance of about five miles, we first perceived the objects we were in pursuit of (viz.) the town and castle of Harlech. After some considerable exertions, we were obliged to abandon this valley, because it was so swampy, and so much intersected by ditches and drains, that it would have been, if not impracticable, at least extremely uncomfortable and difficult to proceed. With great fatigue and perseverance,

verance, we climbed up the almost perpendicular, and craggy sides of the mountain, which bounded that part of the vale, where we were reduced to the above perplexity, and at length reached Harlech; for the first time heartily fatigued.

The country people have no idea that a stranger can be ignorant of their roads; we have not unfrequently asked the way, and received for answer, "that it was as straight as we could go;" when, in a very few paces, we have been perplexed by two roads, one declining to the right, and the other to the left.—Nor have they much idea of distance; each measuring it by the rule of his own judgment and opinion. It is no unusual thing to be told, that the distance to such a place, may be about five miles, "and a pretty good step;" which pretty good step, generally proves to be about five miles more.

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Harlech

Harlech castle is nobly situated, and, like Denbigh, stands upon a lofty promontary, terminating a chain of hills, and commanding on one side a view of the sea, and on the other, a very extensive vale and prospect. From its singular situation, it must have been formerly esteemed almost impregnable; and yet we read in our history, that it was besieged, and taken, in the time of Edward the Fourth, by the Earl of Pembroke, without the assistance of gunpowder. We also here achieved an exploit, which, beyond all doubt, gives us some title to military prowess; for as there did not happen to be any body in the way, who might open the gates of the castle, and our time not permitting us to wait for the ordinary forms of capitulation, we boldly marched up to the assault, and scaling the walls at four different places, took possession of the garrison, as it were

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by a coup-de-main. But for this daring outrage, we had well nigh got into an awkward scrape; some of the inhabitants observing our operations, and probably taking us for free-booters, gave the alarm; and mustering a formidable body of forces, marched in military array, to dispossess us of our strong hold. But we soon pacified our opponents, and having convinced them that our intentions were neither predatory nor hostile, they retired to an ale-house to banish sorrow, and indulge themselves, at our expence, in copious libations of ale.

There is nothing interesting in the road to Barmouth, nor has that place itself any striking peculiarities, except that the houses are so whimsically built, upon the side of a steep hill, that the inhabitants

may have the advantage, if they choose, of looking down their neighbour's chimnies. The town stands upon the sea shore, and in the season is full of company, who resort thither for the purpose of bathing.

From Barmouth to Dolegelly we were highly gratified; the road wound along a ridge of rocks, that hang over the Avonvawr, an arm of the sea; which, at full tide, has the appearance of a large lake, surrounded with beautiful woods: The mountains on both sides, but particularly on the opposite shore, were strikingly grand; and above all, Cader Idris reared its head into the clouds, which, together with the sombre aspect of the evening, and the hollow murmurings of the sea gave an awful sublimity to the scene that cannot be described.

Dolegelly

Dolegelly is a large and dirty town: we took up our quarters at the Golden Lion, a 'good hospitable inn; and next morning, after breakfast, procured a guide to conduct us to the top of Caer Idris. We armed him with stores, and warlike preparations of all kinds (to wit): ham, fowl, bread, and cheese, and brandy, and began the ascent at nine in the morning, and continued to toil for three hours and a half before we reached the top. But, alas! expectation had again flattered us; for, though it was a most lovely day in the valleys, yet here we could not see fifty yards before us; the summit of the mountain is not of greater extent than the base of a common sized room; and, on one side, falls almost perpendicularly many hundred yards in depth. When I stood upon the edge of this precipice, and looked into the frightful abyfs of clouds, it put me in

mind of the chaos, or void space of darkness, so finely described in Milton, when the fallen archangel stood at the gates of hell, pondering the scene before him, and viewing, with horror, the profound expanse of silence and eternal night:

a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
 And time, and place are lost.

The height of this mountain is little inferior to that of Snowden.—The view from it, on a clear day, is grand and magnificent. Ireland, the Isle of Man, North, and South Wales, lie extended before the eye like a level map. The whole mountain is apparently composed of a huge mass of stones, thrown together as a heap of rubbish without order or design; for, wherever you turn up the sod or turf, which

which is not in general more than two inches thick, you come to these stones, and they are nearly about the same dimensions, and have the appearance of being broken with a hammer. Near the summit of the mountain there is no turf, and what is remarkable, these stones are smaller there than in any other place. Had there been any larger massy rocks at the top, it would have afforded a probable conjecture, that shivered in the course of time, by lightnings and tempests, they might have fallen by piece-meal upon the lower sides of the mountain. But, as I have already stated, there is no appearance of that kind at the summit, and such a supposition must therefore be excluded. Nor could an earthquake have caused the phenomenon, because we have no testimony whatever, either ancient or modern, of any part of Great Britain, having been

subject

subject to such extraordinary convulsions of nature; and the idea of the flood being the cause, is futile and ridiculous to the last degree; for the vast body of water, which, we are informed, was collected upon the surface of the earth, would, instead of scooping out valleys, and heaping up mountains, have been more likely to have levelled mountains, and filled up valleys. Besides it is not quite clear, that the whole surface of the globe was affected by that sweeping deluge; and therefore Great Britain, from its remote situation, might, as well as any other country, have been exempted from a share of its favours. But it is not my intention to throw down the gauntlet of controversy, with respect to this, or any other subject of scripture history so extremely remote; it is happy perhaps for the authenticity of many parts of that history,

tory, that it is beyond the reach of human testimony now to disprove it.

It is well for me, my dear friend, that I do not live under the paternal government of the inquisition, either in Venice, or Spain, or Italy, or Portugal, or any other place, where the parental and tender affection of the holy fathers, might solely for the preservation of my soul, mercifully condemn my body to the purification of fire. But to return to the mountain, or rather to take leave of it, for I have already kept you too long upon so ungenial a soil, I will conclude this digression, with the idea of a celebrated philosopher, who conceived it probable, that, when God had compleated his great work, this beautiful world, out of so many rough materials, not knowing what to do with the rubbish that remained, he threw it together in various

rious heaps of different magnitudes, just as it happened, and thus formed what we call mountains.

We arrived at the inn, at Townen Merioneth, late in the evening; where we had the pleasure of being spectators of a Welsh assembly; they invited us to join them, but our fatigue was too great to permit us; added to which our dress was not altogether suitable to the occasion; though, from what I could observe of these honest Cambrians, we should not have been very outre in our appearance, if we had ventured amongst them, habited as we were. I cannot help relating a remarkable instance of simplicity, that happened to me here the same evening. As soon as I had got into bed, I found the sheets were extremely damp, and having suffered so much lately in catching cold,

cold, I thought it a necessary precaution, and indeed but common prudence, to throw them aside. When the maid came to take away the candle, she would not be convinced that the sheets were damp: "Lard sir (said she), it be impossible, for they have been a slept in four or five times within this last week." We left Townen (which is about a mile from the sea), yesterday morning, for there is nothing particularly attracting in that place, or captivating to the eye of a stranger. It was our intention to have reached Aberistwith last evening, but were obliged to take shelter from the fury of a storm, in a solitary house, not far from the ferry at Aberdovy, where we were detained much against our inclinations the whole night; but we have happily arrived here this morning without any further obstacles. Aberistwith is a very respectable bathing place.

place. There are some fine remains of a castle, that formerly commanded the approach from the sea on one side ; and that to the town, from the land on the other.

The trade of Aberistwith is not by any means contemptible ; great quantities of coal, and lead, are found in the neighbourhood, and shipped from this port to different parts of England.

Adieu, my dear sir, and believe me, I feel the greatest pleasure in subscribing myself,

Your sincere friend, &c.

I. H.

LET-

LETTER VII.

THE OLD PASSAGE, August 2, 1794.

IN my last, my dear friend, I said that you would not hear from me until I reached Bath; but I find I shall be detained here till the morning, the weather proving too rough for the passage boat, to venture with their cargo of live and dead stock, and therefore I cannot better fill up the intervening time than by writing to you.

I did not part from my old companions until we reached Llanindovrey, so that we had the pleasure of seeing Pont-arfinach together, otherwise called the Devil's bridge. It is the largest cataract in Wales, and well worth the traveller's at-

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tention.

tention. About one hundred yards from the bridge, there is a house of accommodation for company, though I cannot say much in favour of it; however, it is pleasantly situated, and overlooks the deep and woody glen, into which, from a prodigious height, the waters of the cataract fall, with a deafening noise. With infinite labour and fatigue, I got down to the bottom of this glen, or chasm. I did not undertake the perilous expedition alone; but neither my companion or myself were gratified or recompensed for our trouble, because the cataract is so obscured by bushes and underwood, that, at the foot of it, it is not all discernible.

Tregarron is a miserable hole, in the which however we were constrained to sleep, and to break the windows in our
M bed

bed rooms to let in the fresh air. We took a guide from thence to Llanindovrey, over the lonely and trackless mountains of Cardiganshire; it rained hard the whole way, and we had not even the gloomy consolation of seeing a partner of our misfortunes: for, to speak within compass, we neither beheld a single habitation, nor even a human creature, for more than twenty miles. From Llanindovrey I journeyed on alone, for the rest of the party not being pressed for time, could make their observations at pleasure, having no necessity for hurrying over the country as I was obliged to do.

Brecknock is situated on a small rising, above the river Uik. I cannot do justice to the beauty of the country, the whole way from Brecknock, to Crickhowel and Abergavenny: it is one continued landscape, abounding with every rich va-

riety of scenery, and beautifully interspersed with hamlets and villas. At Crickhowel there are some remains of a castle, but at Abergavenny (commonly pronounced Aberganey), scarcely any: it derives its name from the river Gavenni which there meets the Usk. To me, who had but just quitted the uncultivated and tremendous scenery of North Wales, its rocks, its mountains, and its cataracts; the fertile hills and cultivated vales of Brecknockshire were doubly striking; and the rich features of the latter, heightened beyond the reality from so lively a contrast.

Ragland castle is a very fine ruin, belonging to the duke of Beaufort; the road from thence to Tintern, would gratify the most romantic imagination; the last three miles, or more, being a continual descent through a deep and gloomy wood,

wood, till the astonished traveller bursts from the surrounding scenery full upon the Wye, that rolls its muddy waves in rich meanderings through this solitary glen. The lively picture that immediately offers itself to the view, of boats in full sail, of others landing their cargo, with the busy and cheerful cries of the sailors and workmen, was like the effect of enchantment, and almost created in me an imagination, that I had arrived in another world, and had discovered a new order of beings. At some distance stands the abbey, whose holy isles, and melancholy shades, were once devoted to religious fervour and monastic discipline: it was founded A D, 1131. The monks were of the rigid order of Cisterrians*.

* At what time christianity was introduced into Britain, it is not correctly known; but it is certain that it was in some degree established here, though

We owe to Henry VIII the suppression and overthrow of these seminaries of bigotry and superstition: as long as they

continually persecuted by the Saxon Pagans, long before the arrival of Augustin the Monk, who was sent upon a holy mission into this island, A. D. 596. However, the abuses of christianity were coeval with its introduction; and this holy father himself set his heart not only on spiritual but temporal things; for he was created the first archbishop of Canterbury: he is also accused of having excited the Saxons to fall upon the Britons, and to massacre twelve hundred monks of Bangor. Monachism is supposed to have been introduced into Britain by Pelagius, at the beginning of the fifth century.

The contracted limits of a note are insufficient to enumerate the infinite variety of monkish fraternities, and the crimes they were guilty of: but according to Gregory, their enormities are scarcely credible. In consequence of the suppression of these monasteries in the time of Henry the Eighth, ten thousand religious were turned into the wide world; and Henry became possessed of all monastic revenues whatsoever; these on the whole amounted to six hundred and forty five monasteries, ninety colleges, and two thousand three hundred and twenty four chantries and free chapels.

existed,

existed, the exertions of genius were fettered and confined ; and Europe was overspread with one general gloom of religious fanaticism and intolerance. About the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, some enlightened minds awoke from the general slumber ; but it was a feeble effort, and the darkness returned more thick and heavy than before. Monkish pride and cloistered pedantry every where usurped dominion over man.—Learning and science were finally depressed, and ignorance became the best shield of protection ; but truth at length unfolded the deep veil of hypocrisy and priestcraft—reason resumed her empire—the whole fabric of papal despotism fell at once to the earth ; and lust, cruelty, and revenge, that had so long been concealed within its walls, fled at the first glimmerings of light ; whilst the pure and genuine principles

ciples of Christianity rose as a pillar of glory upon the ruins, and pointed to universal happiness and peace.

The elegance and lightness of the structure exceeds any thing of the gothic architecture I ever saw. It occasioned in me much regret that I was compelled to pass over, and to visit, in so cursory a manner, a scene, which, for beauty and singularity, might challenge nature throughout. I wished to have examined more minutely the venerable remains of this once celebrated abbey; but the very fabric which I was so much admiring, indicated too forcibly that I had to deal with that inexorable and insatiable foe, called "Time." I felt the conviction, and with reluctant steps hastened to Persfield, celebrated for those extensive and magnificent gardens, which have cost so much labour

labour and expence heretofore, though now suffered to run into decay.

Chepstow is a very neat and well situated town; it has a castle that might once have been formidable, but is now a complete ruin. Having thus brought my tour to a conclusion, I have the satisfaction to add, that the event has not disappointed, or fallen short of expectation; and what few difficulties we encountered greatly contributed to heighten our other enjoyments. 'Tis true we have sometimes been obliged to cook our own victuals, sometimes to be content with very scanty fare, and sometimes with none at all; nor were we ever indulged with down beds, chince curtains, or Turkey carpets; but good health and wholesome fatigue rendered such articles of luxury totally useless and unnecessary.

To

To sum up the advantages and disadvantages; I do not hesitate a moment to say, that were I to make the same tour again, or one through a similar country, I should certainly perform it on foot, both from motives of convenience and independency.

Upon the whole I have been as much charmed with the manners of the people, as with the country which they inhabit; there is a boldness and originality in all their actions, which marked the conduct, and characterised the features of their ancestors. A love of liberty and independence is implanted by nature in their breasts, and is cherished into maturity upon their mountains and sea coasts by a hardy and desultory manner of life. With respect to hospitality, they still preserve their original character; the manner of it

is undoubtedly much altered, it is less magnificent but more pleasing; the stranger is not conducted into a noble hall, and placed at the right hand of the chief; no bards attend with the songs of times that are past; the walls are no longer hung with the massy spears of departed heroes, or decorated with the spoils of a vanquished enemy; the conch does not sound to war, nor is the bossy shield struck as the signal to meet the threatening foe. Strange ferocious manners were blended with the hospitality of those days; but, happily for mankind, such barbarous features of uncivilized ages are at length every where humanized into more refined and social enjoyments. Whether society has not arrived at an excess of refinement; whether a great degree of refinement is not the parent of vice and corruption; and if so, whether an age of

barbarity

barbarity with honesty and virtue, or an age of refinement, with effeminacy, vice, and corruption, is most desirable, or most calculated to produce the immediate and eternal happiness of mankind? I leave to be determined by those who have leisure and inclination, to consider with attention so abstracted a subject.

The occupation of war, and the amusements of the chase, have given way to the more domestic employments of pasturage, agriculture, and fishing.—Of the produce of their daily labour, the stranger is generally welcome, and though their poverty is obvious, they refuse every recompence but thanks and civility; I speak chiefly of the lower orders of the people; of the higher, or more opulent, the manners are almost every where the same.

I cannot

I cannot do better than quote, upon this occasion, a couple of stanzas from Churchyard, who has been a constant companion in my walks, and has better expressed in poetry the character of the people in this particular, than I could have done, had I attempted it, in prose:

Like brethren now doe Welshmen still agree,
In as much love as any men alive;
The friendship there and concord that I see,
I do compare to bees in honey hive;
Which keep in swarme and hold together still,
Yet gladly shoue to straunger great good will;
A corteous kynd of love in every place,
A man may find in simple peoples face.

Passé where you please on plaine or mountaine
wilde,
And bear yourselfe in sweete and civil fort,
And you shall sure be haulst with man or childe,
Who will salute with gentle comely port
The passers by: on braves they stand not so,
Without good speech to let a trav'ler go:
They think it dett and duetie franke and free,
In towne or fielde to yeeld you cap and knee.

N

In

In Wales, pride and poverty go hand in hand, and the disposition of the people is strongly blended with superstition. When we were at the top of Cader Idris (the etymology of which signifies the chair of the giant Idris), the guide shewed us the giant's bed, at which we could not help laughing; the honest fellow, however, rebuked us for such levity, and expressed his belief as to the identity and existence of the giant, at the same time justifying himself from the authority of a clergyman, who had lately made a pilgrimage to the same spot; and, immediately falling down on his knees, began to say his prayers in a devout manner, and an audible voice; without doubt to appease the manes of this tremendous giant, and breathe out a pious requiem to his soul.

The general character of the people is
certainly

certainly amiable—their attachments are strong and sincere ; their passions and resentments violent, but transitory, which is always the characteristic of an unpolished people. The ingenuousness of nature is shewn in its real colours, and displayed in all their actions. They do not trouble themselves with the politics of the times, or addict themselves to the habits of thinking, and the cares of the world they have little concern with ; for they are free from those occupations, those tremulous solitudes, which engross the attention of a commercial people. With respect to their language, I am not sufficiently acquainted to give any opinion ; to my ear, I must confess, it is not very harmonious ; but resembles rather the ravishing sounds of a cat-call, or the musical clack of a flock of geese when highly irritated. The dialects are extremely various, and the

difference is often observable, even between adjacent counties ; but in North and South Wales, there is so great a variation, that they may almost be said to be different languages. Yet, notwithstanding, I feel much pleasure whenever I hear it spoken, being the old Celtic dialect, which, together with the simplicity of the country people, brings back to my mind the memory of former times ; but my ideas of them are so imperfect, and our knowledge in general, of the relative virtue and happiness of our Celtic ancestors, so confused, that I scarcely know whether to rejoice that those times are past, or wish that they may again return ; with respect to them, and the Welsh, as they are at this day, there appears to me to be this material distinction : the former knew not what wealth (in the modern acceptation of the word) was ; and consequently

consequently were strangers to many vices attendant upon it. The latter, from their intercourse with the rich and mercantile parts of Great Britain, have unfortunately acquired a relish for riches without the means of procuring them: hence arises that pride which prompts them to conceal their poverty, and that jealousy of their national character and situation, which breaks out almost upon every occasion. The children are remarkably beautiful, and usually well made, but this only continues during their infancy; for, from the age of ten and upwards, they begin to bear the marks of hard labour, and still more precarious subsistence.—

A haggard countenance, a reduced appearance, and, in short, all the traces of a premature old age*: sad proofs these of

* Poverty, though it does not prevent the generation, is extremely unfavourable to the rearing of chil-

poverty and wretchedness; and but too true indications of misery and want, and

dren; the tender plant is produced, but in so cold a soil, and so severe a climate, soon withers and dies. It is not uncommon in the Highlands of Scotland, for a mother who has borne twenty children not to have two alive. Very few of them arrive at the age of thirteen or fourteen; in some places one half of the children born, die before they are four years of age; in many places before they are seven; and almost every where before they are nine or ten. This great mortality, however, will be found chiefly amongst the children of the common people, who cannot afford to tend them with the same care as those of better station.

Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations."

This excellent writer, whose calculations are in general so accurate and exact, has here stated facts the most melancholy, truths altogether disgraceful to society; hard lot of poverty indeed! and blasted is the soil, if its influence extends to the untimely and unmerited destruction of the human race. The stale and hacknied argument, that these things are permitted by Providence for some wise purposes unknown to man, must in this instance be rejected, because it is apparently a levity of cruelty, to give a numerous offspring to the parent, only to mock and insult

of an inferiority of condition, justifiable upon no grounds whatever, either of revealed religion, or natural equity. The population of North Wales, compared with its extent, is very trifling, and unequal. This may be accounted for from a long chain of causes, but chiefly from the continual state of discord and warfare, in which the chiefs and princes were always involved, until the final subjugation of Wales by Edward

sult her with a prospect of happiness, and then leave her to anguish and despair.

Great Britain is enabled to provide for more than its present population, even without the assistance of any external commerce. And Europe, it is well known, might maintain one hundred millions of souls more than she at present does. Government then is the only remaining cause of all these evils: government, which ought to remove every obstacle to population, endeavours to depress and retard it; nor is there any hope of amendment, while amongst numerous other causes, the abuse of estates, the rapacity of finance, and the immense establishment of standing armies continue to exist.

the

the First, and even then, the inhabitants were treated merely as a conquered people, and admitted to few privileges of the conquerors; for it was not till the time of Henry the Eighth, that they were suffered to have the same advantages with English subjects. Secondly, from the situation of the country, which is too remote for the English land trader, and opposed to a very dangerous sea; added to which its ports are by no means so commodious and safe as those of England. Thirdly, and principally, the barrenness of the soil, together with the mountainous nature of the country, and consequently the great difficulty of land carriage, which is the chief obstacle to its internal trade. These are certainly serious impediments to the flourishing state and prosperity of the people; but they are not beyond a remedy, and it ought to become the duty
of

of the legislature to provide every possible means of improvement, and to endeavour, by wisdom and attention, to remove or diminish those local inconveniences which are a bar to the happiness of the society of any particular district or tract of land over which that legislature has dominion; establish manufactures, hold out rewards for agriculture; in short, increase the population of the country by the most approved methods; wealth will follow of course, commerce will be extended, and the now desolated mountains of North Wales may, at least, repay the labour of cultivation, though they can never be so productive and flourishing as those of their southern neighbours. We know that Attica was little better than a desert of sand; yet, encouraged by wise laws, the inhabitants overcame the obstructions of nature, and it quickly flourished as the garden of Greece.

Greece. We know the almost insurmountable obstacles that the great Czar Peter had to encounter ; yet, in spite of these, affluence smiled upon the industrious exertions of his subjects, directed by his wisdom to useful employments : the arts found an asylum in the frozen regions of Russia, and, from a land of poverty and desolation, it became a great and flourishing empire ; but the sole end of governments seems to be forgotten, and, instead of having for their great and ultimate object, the happiness and advantage of that society by whom they were instituted ; they now seem calculated only for the advantage of a few ; and the legislators of nations are become the individual brokers of public property ; which, with the lives of mankind, are squandered away, as ambition or caprice may rule the hour, and dictate to their councils.

You

You will perceive, my dear friend, that I have not entered into minute and particular descriptions—I have neither given you a detail of sieges, nor presented you with a genealogy half a mile long—I have not described a feast, nor filled up my pages with inscriptions from old tomb stones ; but if you wish to derive information on these heads, I refer you to the pompous descriptions of Young, and to the diffuse and voluminous work of Penant. The world is doubtless indebted to the latter for his excellent history of Wales, but it is still a history, and has too much of the detail in it to afford me any gratification in the perusal.

I have studiously avoided dwelling upon any thing which bore an analogy, or resemblance to works of art, or unproductive ambition. To search out nature in all
her

her various forms, has constituted my chief delight ; and to find her in her wildest attitudes, has proved to me the highest source of gratification and enjoyment.

I hope, and fully expect to see you very soon at Cambridge. My best wishes attend you, and believe me to be, with the utmost sincerity,

Your affectionate Friend,

I. H.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

IT may not be unacceptable to some of my readers, to lay before them a few general observations with respect to this country.

NORTH WALES

IS DIVIDED INTO SIX COUNTIES.

	Contents in square miles.	Towns.	Parishes.
Caernarvonshire	430	5	68
Denbighshire	670	4	57
Flintshire	250	2	28
Merionethshire	790	4	37
Montgomeryshire	860	6	47
Anglesea	180	2	74
	3180	23	311

The market towns in Caernarvonshire, are Carnarvon, Aberconway, Kreckith, Pulheli, and Nevin. It has besides one city, Bangor.

In Denbighshire, are Denbigh, Ruthin, Wrexham, and Llanroft.

In Flintshire, Holywell, and Caerwis, with one city, St. Asaph. Flint has no market, but sends one member to Parliament.

In Merionethshire, are Harleigh, Dolgelle, Dinasmouthy, and Bala.

Montgomeryshire contains Montgomery, Llanvilling, Welshpool, Newtown, Machynleth, and Llanydlos.

Anglesea

Anglesea has Beaumaris, and Newburgh.

No. of square miles in Wales	7011
Ditto in North Wales - -	3180
Ditto in South Wales - -	3831

The population of North and South Wales, are together estimated at about three hundred thousand souls, so that it will appear there are not upon the average, quite forty-three inhabitants to each square mile. I regret much that I have not been able to learn the exact proportion of population between North and South Wales; there is, however, no doubt that the latter has by much the largest share. The Isle of Anglesea contains fifteen thousand inhabitants, and has rather better than eighty three to each square mile; but it is the most populous

part of the north division of our principality. The total amount of the waste lands in Wales, is computed to be about 1,629,307 acres, and great part of this is stated to be incurable; but I am inclined to believe that if two or three regiments of soldiers (instead of spending in barracks a life totally unproductive to themselves, and useless to society in every instance, except for the heroic and benevolent purposes of murder, rapine, and oppression), were set to work upon them at a shilling each per diem, exclusive of their pay, the country would, in a short time, assume a very different aspect. The price of labour is greater in South, than it is in North Wales, and yet in Caermarthenshire, which is a southern county, labourers are only paid ten pence a day in summer, and find their own diet, and eight pence in the winter months. The land

land tax a few years ago produced 43,752l.

There are numerous mines of coal, slate, copper, &c. that are a great source of employment to the poor.—What trade they have, is, for the most part, inland, and consists chiefly in horned cattle, lead, copper, and coal. Great part of the land, and particularly in Cardiganshire, is wild pasture, and, in its present state, only fit to feed that hardy kind of cattle so peculiar to the country itself; consequently sheep, cows, &c. are very cheap, and will continue so until agriculture flourishes more than it does at present; or, in other words, until it becomes more profitable to extend tillage, and sow seed for the food of man, than dedicate the rude and natural produce of the earth to the nourishment of cattle; for, in proportion to the extension

of agriculture, the price of cattle will be advanced, because the number is thereby diminished, and the demand for them greater. The Welsh are probably descended from the Belgic Galls, and hence called Galles, or Walles, *i. e.* Strangers. The country was also formerly inhabited by three tribes of Britons, the Silures, Dimetæ, and Ordovices. It preserved its independency until the thirteenth century.

There are two circuits, viz.

North East	{ containing }	Flint, Denbigh, Mont-
North West		gomery, Anglesea & Caernarvon.

Wales sends twenty-four representatives to parliament, twelve for the counties, and the same number for the boroughs.

If the traveller wishes to see Bangor, he must cross the Menai from Anglesea

at

at the Bangor ferry; but we had been informed that there was scarcely any thing worthy of particular notice at that place, which account has been since confirmed to me, by a gentleman with whom I am well acquainted, and who, in company with some others, made a similar excursion to our's, and in a similar manner. It is from his notes that I am enabled to give some account of Llanberis. The road from Bangor to Llanberis is over some stupendous mountains, commanding, as one might have expected, a very extensive, and not an uninteresting prospect. The vale of Llanberis may contend the point of superiority, with respect to beauty, perhaps with any in Wales; the mountains on one side being entirely without verdure, and rising almost perpendicular from the vale, whilst those on the other side appear to be highly cultivated; the

the vale itself consisting mostly of fine pasture ground, some small lakes at one extremity, and a few rustic cots at the other; here is also a copper mine in the hands of the Macclesfield company. From Llanberis to Caernarvon; which is about ten miles, the road lies at first over high and unpleasant mountains, and is afterwards succeeded by a low flat, equally dull and disagreeable.

Eight miles from Dolegelley are the falls of the Caen and Morthway. The highest part of Snowdon is called the Wyddfa, from whence, according to Penant, its most credible altitude above the level of the sea, is one thousand one hundred and eighty nine yards. The height of the Cader above the green at Dolegelley is about nine hundred and fifty yards. The road to Machynleth, by the

the pool of Three Grains, is for the most part picturesque and beautiful. The town, for a Welsh one, is rather neat; from hence to Aberistwith, is a pleasing and rich country, through which flows the river Dovey.

There is a remarkable custom which the Welsh still continue; that I cannot forbear mentioning: When a marriage is about to take place amongst the middling and lower orders of people, it is usual to invite all their friends and relations of every description, who, when they take leave, present the bridegroom with some small present, of one or two shillings, which, however, they have a right to demand again after a certain space of time; the intent of it being probably to enable the new married couple to buy stock, or engage in some business that may allow
them

them soon to repay the small donations of their friends. It is called "a bidding," and is drawn up in the following form.

"My only son John has lately entered the sacred state of union, and a bidding is fixed on the occasion, on Tuesday the 7th day of October next, in the village of Conwyl, when and where your good company and benevolence are highly solicited, which will be cheerfully acknowledged on a similar occasion, and esteemed a peculiar favor conferred on,

Your most devoted
humble Servants,

JOHN JONES, Senior.

JOHN JONES, Junior.

CONWYL,
Sept. 13, 1794.

P. S. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, of Pantyrhaidd, Mr. Jones, of Clynadda, Mr. Evan Harries,

Harries, of Nant-yr-olchfa, and his brother, David Harries, of Llandre, unite us in complimenting all with their sincerest gratulation.—The young man's parents request that all their donations of the above nature may be retaliated then."

In the course of our tour I had often occasion to regret that I knew nothing of drawing; the pencil may find room for continual employment in the romantic views of North Wales; but without professing myself either a poet, a painter, or a botanist, I felt highly gratified at the magnificent scenery which that country every where displays. Equally delighted with the elegant simplicity of nature, but not so familiar with its productions as another, I cannot find the same sources of intellectual acquisitions. Undoubtedly the antiquarian and the botanist have a
wide

wider field of investigation; and a more en-
 larged page of science is constantly dis-
 played to their view. The poet and the
 philosopher are more abstracted in their
 observations, find other principles for the
 materials of thought, and apply the rude
 unconnected objects of their contempla-
 tion, as so many foundations, upon which
 to build the light fabric of fancy, either in
 the regions of moral, political, or meta-
 physical speculation; but where these
 are united, nature must amply repay her
 observer, and be at once an inexhaustible
 mine of information and amusement.

BRITISH
 11 DE 72
 MUSEUM

LIST

TOWNS, &c.

WITH

THEIR DISTANCES FROM EACH OTHER.

CAMBRIDGE 0

Oxford, three weeks 60

Glocester * 47

Ross * 61

Hereford 42

Leominster * 61

Bishop's Castle * 25

Montgomery 7

Welsh Pool 9

Llanvilling * 12

Llangunnog 8

Bala * 12

Brought over 254

The Druid House *	8
Corwen	2½
Llangollin	9½
Ruabon	7
Wrexham **	5
Ruthin	16
Denbigh *	8
St. Asaph	6
Holywell *	11
Rudland	11
Abergeley *	15
Conway *	11
Llanaber, or Abber **	19
Over the Ferry to Beaumaris	5
Amlwch *	18
Gwynn	19
Moel Don *	15
The Ferry	1

411

Caernarvon

	Brought over	411
Caernarvon *		4½
Bethkelert **		12
Pont Aberglasslyn		1
Tan y Bwlch *		7
Rhaidr Du		3
Tan y Bwlch **		3
Harlech		9
Barmouth *		10
Dolegelly *		10
Cader Idris		7
Towen Merionith *		12
Aberdovy		5
Ferry *		1½
Aberistwith *		9
Pont ar Finach		12
Tregarron *		15
Llanindovrey *		21
Treastle		9

562

Brecknock

Brought over	562
Brecknock	10
Crickhowel	13
Abergavenny	6
Ragland	8
Tintern Abbey	8
Persfield	4
Chepstow	2
Old Passage	3
Ferry	1
Bristol	12

Lower Meronith 12

629	Acordov
11	Ferry
9	Aberlwith
12	Port or Tins
12	Tregon
12	Llanidov
9	Trecastle

THE END.



262
Brecknock

ERRATA.

Page 17, line 17, *for latte read latter.*

Page 44, line 3, *for Gentlemen read Gentleman.*

Page 73, line 14, *for nor read not.*

Page 36, line 2, *for dange read danger.*

Page 99, line 12, *for Collinos read Collins.*



